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We beg to state that we decline to return or to enter into correspondence as to rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception. Manuscripts not acknowledged within four weeks are rejected.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

France is happy in having as figurehead a striking figure. President Poincaré is more than a figurehead, but not less he symbolises in his person the French State. It is always unlucky, though not unusual, when one who occupies a place of ornament and dignity is not ornamental. But M. Poincaré fills the part every way. He has personality, French personality of the best sort. His distinction of mind, fine, clear, logical, agrees with, perhaps accounts for, his felicitous clear-cut speech. He has so emphasised Anglo-French good understanding that other Powers cannot reasonably think they are being talked at. "Co-operation which does not exclude the participation of any other Power and which tends, on the contrary, to the maintenance of the European understanding." This is the right note.

There might be something really personal in the welcome given to M. Poincaré, though the public here knows little of him. It is but a short time, after all, since his name has come prominently before Europe. But London would seem to have realised that in receiving M. Poincaré it was doing something very different from receiving M. Loubet or M. Fallières, worthy men, no doubt, but any other bourgeois would have done as well. A better man now stands for a better France. Who is to complain if, on an enthusiastic occasion, he sees the past in the rose-colour of the present?

"Is it not decreed by the very nature of things that the two peoples of Great Britain and France should ever be associated for the progress of civilisation and the maintenance of peace in the world?" The history of the "dear neighbours" seems to show that "the nature of things" was remarkably slow in asserting itself. It is not of much use to blink the truth. Countries that

have common interests will associate themselves for common ends. It is not ideals nor the nature of things that binds them. Nations combined for ideals in the Middle Ages and fought for them; but not now.

The German Emperor might well feel some elation, when reviewing, in his speech at the North German Yacht Club's regatta on Wednesday, the progress of German watermanship in his time. "When I came to the throne there were eight schools which devoted themselves to rowing. Now there are three hundred and sixty." This is not brag: it is just satisfaction at the attainment of a great end deliberately pursued. The Emperor deftly corrected the flamboyance of the burgo-master of Hamburg's oratory by the reminder that German progress on the water can go on only "if Heaven allows us to enjoy peace as we have enjoyed it hitherto".

There has been a battle between the Serbs and the Bulgarians, but officially the two countries are still at peace. Unfortunately the Servian Chamber has met under the excitement of the news, and it is quite possible that a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet will be carried. In that case, M. Pashitch will hardly be able to hang on. Meanwhile the Servian Prime Minister is doing his best, and he has M. de Hartwig's great influence behind him. All the Balkan States are preparing documents to submit to the Tsar, and except in Servia the Governments still have the situation in hand. Even the Turks have executed some of Mahmud Shevket's murderers, and Constantinople keeps calm.

Austria has answered the Tsar's telegram through a declaration in the Hungarian Parliament. Upholding the principle of Balkan independence, she tries to exhibit Russia as a dictator. The relations between these two Powers are most correct, but Russia is doubtless happy at having recovered some of the ground lost in 1908. The Conference of Ambassadors has expressed no opinion on Russia's independent action, which has however made it difficult for Europe as a whole to intervene. Another such step and the Conference will become useless.

Both the French and the German Parliaments are busy with Army Bills, but in very different moods. The Reichstag has sanctioned the new increases by a vote unanimous except for the Poles. The Socialists have indeed protested that a better Government would have avoided the necessity for such a Bill, but are concentrating on its financial side in the hope of establishing a graduated income tax. In France the Extreme Left is busy obstructing. The difference is all in favour of Germany, though it is only fair to France to admit that the spirit of the country is good and that in French politics obstruction is generally a sign of impotence.

William Klare, who called himself a German dentist, but was in reality a *souteneur*, has been sentenced to five years' penal servitude under the Official Secrets Act as a spy. He made a mistake in trying to bribe a Portsmouth hair-dresser named Rosenthal. Why he selected him did not appear, but Rosenthal introduced him to an officer who straightway provided the materials for a trap for Klare. A book asked for by Klare and described as a highly confidential document was handed to him, and he was immediately arrested. The very fact of the book's existence being known outside official circles, it was said, was prejudicial to the State. How did Klare get to know of it? Neither he nor Rosenthal was in official circles. The prisoner's defence was an accusation of a plot against Rosenthal and the officer.

Jamaica has appealed to the Imperial Government to make representations at Washington of the injury which the proposed American tax will inflict on the banana industry. While to some the necessity will serve to show what the West Indies would gain if they became American, to others it will be a proof of the advantage the Colonies enjoy from the Imperial connexion. The appeal reminds us of a story told of a Canadian Minister who went to Japan with a view to certain negotiations. He saw only the smaller officials, was put to much inconvenience, and made no progress till one day he asked the British Minister to intervene. A note from the Minister in Tokio got him an immediate interview with a member of the Japanese Cabinet, and his business went through with no more delay.

The House of Commons did a stroke of positive business on Wednesday in guaranteeing a loan of £3,000,000 for the development of the Sudan. The Sudan, according to the report of the British Cotton Growing Association, needs but a small capital outlay for irrigation and public works to yield imperially a hundredfold. Lord Kitchener, in his report, pointedly expressed his satisfaction that the Government intended to guarantee the loan. Without a Government guarantee the Sudan could not raise the money; and, naturally, if the Sudan goes to pieces, the Treasury will suffer.

The resignation of Sir Archibald Hunter of his post as Governor of Gibraltar has at last been officially announced. It has been an open secret for many weeks past that his return to Gibraltar, even for a time, was quite out of the question. That there are certain problems connected with the better regulating of affairs in Gibraltar is unquestionable, but that these can be dealt with without any serious difficulty is equally so. Unfortunately Sir Archibald Hunter managed to introduce his proposed reforms in a manner calculated to set the civil and military classes at Gibraltar at loggerheads. Such bungling is deplorable, and does not render easier the task of his successor to the Governorship. We wish Sir Herbert Miles all success in his new command.

One would think that Radicals would just now be a little shy of words like "impropriety" or "indelicacy". General Count Gleichen does not find them so. It seems that General Count Gleichen has

made remarks at a public dinner which, in the opinion of certain Radicals, are improper and indelicate to the last degree. General Count Gleichen appears to be a very blunt and forthright soldier, who in a fit of pardonable temper has run a considerable risk of breaking the King's Regulations with language about men of peace who want to "down" the Army. He seems indeed to have publicly suggested that Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Carnegie would, in the event of its passing, come well within the provisions of the Mental Deficiency Bill.

Mr. Swift MacNeill was hot upon the General's heels in the House on Wednesday. We have looked into one or two reports of Count Gleichen's speech, and we must confess we find very little politics in it. We find much soldierly impatience with frothy and silly talk about "militarism", which no sensible person, in politics or out, takes at all seriously. We find no "political invective of a partisan character", unless zeal for the honour of the Services and the very rough edge of a soldier's tongue can be so described. Moreover, General Count Gleichen has already expressed his regret for "certain injudicious references". This would seem to close the "incident", even according to the Government's view of the correct way in which "improprieties" and "indiscretions" should determine.

Lord Roberts at the Queen's Hall on Wednesday was as little tender as General Count Gleichen of the people who talk of "militarism", "pressed men" and the "liberty of the subject". His advice to the National Service League was to concentrate upon getting the enemy into the open. Till now they have always retired behind the defence that "all is well". That defence can hardly much longer stand against the overwhelming evidence that all is not well—evidence that even Mr. Seely has in his heart already accepted. "One volunteer is worth ten pressed men", as a second line of the Government's defence of their Territorials, will not do. It is immediately countered with "One trained man is worth ten men untrained". Besides, there are not even enough untrained men under the present system.

A debate on parliamentary procedure to-day is always in effect a debate at the expense of the House of Commons. Every head which fell during the Terror only brought France nearer to the end of the Terror and the Revolution; so every Bill, every debate, gagged or guillotined in the House of Commons, only brings England nearer to the end of the present parliamentary system. We may regard the debate this week on parliamentary procedure in the same light as we regard all the others on the subject since this Government has been in office. The Government has a political philosopher, Lord Morley—we wonder does he really think that the House of Commons in its form to-day is not being destroyed inevitably by the gag and guillotine?

Hence Lord Selborne, whether he was thinking of this or not, was obviously right this week when he declared the House of Commons was "going". It is impossible that for long you can have in health and vigour—in bare existence indeed—a House of Commons whose very origin and aim and end is free speech, and yet which is constantly, almost ceaselessly, gagged and guillotined. It is true the Radicals may retort that the Unionists have closed hard, too, in their time. The Unionists have. Perhaps they have been the Constitutionalists or the Girondists of this movement against the House of Commons. But now the Radicals are the Hébertists and Dantonists.

Lord Lansdowne made a strong speech on the Land question in England at Matlock on Saturday. It will be very distasteful to Unionists who, in this matter of small holdership, still wish to dabble in the shallows; for Lord Lansdowne takes a bold plunge

into deep water. He knows that deep water is better for the strong swimmer than shallow. The Government took a frightened header into the shallows, and have struck their heads against the rocks—for their smallholder policy has turned out a wretched failure.

Lord Lansdowne is ready to go far. He advises the Unionist Party to adopt a policy by which the whole of the purchase-money for the land shall be found by the State whenever the right kind of smallholder or farmer turns up. When we advised as much in the SATURDAY REVIEW the wise heads began to shake. No doubt all the cranks and extremists of theory will be horrified at Lord Lansdowne's speech. The extreme self-aiders will see blank ruin in it; the extreme State-aiders will be scandalised at the idea of employing public money to make people in the end largely independent of the State or local authority! It will be gall and wormwood indeed to those who would solve all human difficulties by means of rigid principle. But those who care more for the peasant on the earth than the principle in the air will rejoice in Lord Lansdowne's wise, bold policy.

That it will be adopted and carried out by the Unionist party we cannot doubt. When the English peasantry learn that the best and keenest of themselves are to have land of their own, and that many thousands of small freehold farms will be started by the next Unionist Government the effect will be great. Such a policy will simply sweep the countryside. Radicals will lose seats in the obstinate west and in the eastern counties too. But the truth has to be brought home to the villagers; and at first they will hardly believe the good tidings.

The Insurance Amendment Bill, so far as it goes, is well enough. It simplifies the national scheme in a number of small ways (for instance, it does away with age distinctions). It legalises the increase of the doctor's fees. It penalises employers for deducting more than the statutory contribution from the wages of their employees. Most important of all, it relieves persons who are in arrears with their contributions owing to unemployment from finding the employers' share of the deficit as well as their own. All these improvements add to the expenses of the Act; but they are necessary cobbling. The main grievances, of course, remain. The choice of doctor is still withheld; and medical benefit is not "adequate".

The interpretation put upon the word "adequate" by the Commissioners is perhaps the worst feature of National Insurance as it stands. Mr. Lloyd George undertook for fixed payments by the insured to provide "adequate" medical treatment. Adequate treatment is translated by the Commissioners into only such treatment as can properly be undertaken by the ordinary general practitioner. Virtually this means that sickness benefit (apart from sanatorium benefit) merely covers the minor ills. Surgery, specialist diagnosis, any ailment that requires a course of institutional treatment—all the really serious cases, in fact—have been ruled out by the Commissioners. This is flat defiance of the intentions of Parliament as expressed in the text of the original Act.

The amending Bill should at any rate have put the Commissioners square with the Act they have to administer. It should have straightened out the crooked interpretations they have been compelled to make.

"And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,
That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,
Or nicely charge your understanding soul
With opening titles miscreate, whose right
Suits not in native colours with the truth."

Mr. George owes it to his dear and faithful Commissioners to make honest men of them by Act of Parliament. His hesitation is not difficult to understand. To put into plain terms the Act, not as it was proclaimed

at first, but as it is actually working to-day, would show up too clearly the breach between his promises and their fulfilment.

Not content with clearing the Marconi Ministers, the local wire pullers would place them on pedestals. Reading has begun with the Attorney-General; shortly perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have a regular triumphant progress through Carnarvon; and apparently Lord Murray's turn will come, as at last he is tearing himself away from his engagements in Colombia. We fancy most people, Radical and Unionist alike, will judge these rejoicings slightly overdone. We do not expect Sir Rufus Isaacs and Mr. Lloyd-George to go for the rest of their lives in a white sheet; but they should not yet don the coat of many colours. It is not a very grand thing to be acquitted of corruption.

Moreover, what is to be done about Taylor, the Post-office official who was dismissed for buying Marconi shares? He bought in small quantities the English variety, whereas Ministers bought in large quantities the American variety. We quite admit there is a difference. But is it altogether English fair play that the little dog should be whipped, whilst the big dogs are patted? One would like to hear what these Ministers think of the Taylor case. One or two of their constituents might do worse than sound them through the post in the matter.

Captain Murray has again presented his Bill for the better regulation of advertisements. The disfigurement of the countryside is his protest. If this is really to be cured by Parliament, the French method of a tax upon advertisements, levied on a sliding scale according to size, is perhaps the best way. But the mischief is deeper than the vandalism of vulgar people in a big way with something to sell. The real mischief—quite incurable by Act of Parliament—is the indifference of the public. If the public really cared—if it really resented the ugliness of modern advertising, an ugly poster would defeat the object of the posting firm. It would put people off the wares of the advertiser. For ourselves there are things we would never buy, though they were the cheapest and best in the market—things inveterately associated with the spoiling of the country and the marring of the town.

Mr. Balfour at Teddington on the glories of science was enthusiastic, but he was sober. All honour was due to science; but the greatest things remained beyond science. They were immeasurable. The air-waves produced by the harmonies of a noble symphony might be measured to the last vibration of the remotest overtone; but its beauty was beyond range. The "energy" of life could be measured; but life itself was mysterious. No one has more highly celebrated pure science than Mr. Balfour; but he does not claim the impossible.

Sir Jonathan Hutchinson's last achievement was that of dying of real old age. It is very rare, and it does not imply either that he attained any abnormal number of years, as he was no more than eighty-five. But no specific disease or accident carried him off, and he simply lived out his constitutional stock of vitality. He was not so much a great operative surgeon as an investigator of disease. For fifty years he was the greatest authority on that form of inherited or acquired disease which accounts for so much physical and mental degeneracy. For almost the same period he has investigated leprosy. The opposition to his original theory that it is due to badly cured fish made him eager in bringing many of his investigations in leprosy countries to public notice in the newspapers; and it stirred his philanthropic zeal on behalf of lepers. He urged that segregation was unnecessary and cruel, and the practice seems declining in consequence.

The verdict of the jury in the action by the father of a passenger against the Oceanic Steam Navigation

Company for negligence in navigating the "Titanic" very well represents the popular opinion about the disaster. At the time the general feeling was that in the presence of ice there ought to have been a slackening of speed. Contrary expert opinion as to this was given both at the inquiry and this trial. The jury decided that there was not negligence of look-out, but there was in respect of speed. The Marconigrams, and particularly the message from the "Mesaba" as to ice being just in front of the "Titanic", they say were received; but whether the "Mesaba" message was communicated to some responsible officer was not sufficiently proved. The legal effect of this verdict has still to be argued.

At the Road Parliament held at Westminster Mr. Lloyd George, who gave the third annual address, spoke as if the three millions and a half provided by Parliament for the Road Board since the Act of 1909 had been spent on roads and improvements. But a statement by Mr. Masterman to Mr. Bridgeman shows that only about a fourth of the amount has been actually spent, and the rest has been invested by the Board. This is "the little balance in the bank" that Mr. George spoke of with such an insinuation of shrewdness, but motorists are complaining that it was not given to be invested, but to be used. The answer they get is that not until there is enough capital for big things can big things be done.

Why did the Suffragettes lose their chance on Wednesday? Why did they not turn themselves, colours flying, into an army of rose-hawkers and so kill two birds with one stone? Kill both is probably what they would have done; and it would have been worth while enduring even the thorns of Rose Day for that.

Mr. William Watson and Mr. Rudyard Kipling have been freely named as candidates for the laurel. Mr. William Watson and Mr. Rudyard Kipling burst this week simultaneously into song in celebration of M. Poincaré. May we detect here a timely insinuation into the public ear that, though the laureate's chair be empty, yet are there poets who can rise to a public occasion? These poems come most carefully upon their hour.

J. H. Taylor is again open champion of golf: one could not wish the honour to fall to a better player or a better sportsman. It is a victory of skill no doubt first, but not of skill alone. It is a victory in some degree, even in large degree, of temperament and conduct. It is a good thing when, in a contest of this kind, victory goes to men who are modest, well behaved and well spoken.

Taylor is truly a great player. He hits the ball two hundred and fifty yards from the tee without seeming to hit it very hard; whilst the iron play and the little mashie strokes, how wonderful they are in accuracy! But after all the end of every man's desire in golf is the green, and it is good to stand on the green with Taylor when he has the touch of his putter. Much nonsense is talked about professionals being bad putters. One would rather describe the great professionals as being uncanny putters. Their delicacy and control of the ball are so extraordinary, and they seem to judge to a grass blade. A bad amateur can sometimes out-drive Taylor or Braid; but set him on the green with them, and he appears a poor cart-horse among the finest racers.

"I once found myself wondering why God had, through the whole history of the earth, saved up the most beautiful of all flags for our own nation."

Mr. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the American Navy, who said this in a Flag Day speech at Boston (14 June), will no doubt be astounded, when he gets to Paradise, at not seeing the Stars and Stripes flying over the entrance.

M. POINCARÉ'S FELICITY.

M. POINCARÉ has the right touch. The success of his visit has been enhanced in the opinion of the more observant by the exquisite tact and urbanity of his speeches. He has praised the Entente just enough and in the right way. He has not contrasted it invidiously with the groupings of other Powers, but has praised it as a factor in the maintenance of European peace. He has understood that this country is not out for adventure, but only desires the stability of peace. Educated Englishmen soon discovered, if they did not know it before, that in M. Poincaré we have the best type of the French intellectual and man of action. There is indeed no doubt that in choosing M. Poincaré France has given herself the most distinguished President she has had since Thiers. It would rather appear too that he has determined to restore the Presidential office to a position it has not had since the retirement of the first and one great President. He will not remain what Napoleon contemptuously called "*un cochon à l'engrais de quelques millions*", but will play a distinguished part in the direction of his country's destinies. M. Poincaré's election as Head of the Executive corresponds with, or, perhaps, more properly may be regarded as another symptom of a great change in French feeling. For many years nothing but mediocrity was allowed to hold sway in the Republican system. Now we see a career open to distinguished men. But much more remarkable is the revival of national spirit in every direction and a demand that the dignity of the country shall be adequately supported. Not inappropriately there is at the same time a general weakening of the anti-Christian campaign and parliamentarism is on the wane. Time alone can show whether this is merely a fleeting whim or a permanent state of mind. The mediocrity and corruption of the parliamentary régime could only have become established in France, where there is so great a love of distinction, in a period of national depression and lassitude such as followed, naturally enough, upon the disasters of 1870-71. The fiasco of Boulanger also helped to discourage Cæsarism and a Royalist revival. But with the growth of national confidence there has naturally come a reaction of the French spirit against all that was sordid in the worst elements of the parliamentary system. The present French Ministry has maintained its position by appealing to the best instincts in the French character. In forcing through the great change in the army law it can only succeed by the help of the more Conservative politicians assisted by Radicals who place country before party. The cynic may say that the politician supports the Bill only because he believes his constituents desire it, but that is merely to pay a compliment to the patriotism of the French elector. There is no denying that the Bill puts a very severe strain on the goodwill of the population in general. It involves a distinct breach of contract between the State and the recruits now serving, only to be justified by dire necessity, as indeed it is. If it becomes law, no man will be able to gainsay the patriotism of the majority in France.

When the law is passed, we shall see how far the President stands for Conservatism. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are notoriously more Radical than the Head of the State. We may not improbably see another anti-clerical campaign started to regain the support of Radicalism jeopardised by the Army Bill. We may then learn whether France lost or gained when M. Poincaré exchanged Parliament for the Elysée. There can be no doubt that he is playing the ceremonial part to perfection. Nothing in fact could be better than his references to the scope and effect of the Entente in European politics. It is a pity therefore that some English newspapers seem determined to wrest it out of the position which M. Poincaré has most properly assigned to it. While we have the parties themselves emphatically asserting that the one object of the Entente is the maintenance of European peace and the general equilibrium, we find some of their

friends talking of an "Alliance" and hinting at developments which would clearly mean anything but peace. So long as the Entente has the meaning which the French President assigns to it, it will remain a beneficent force in Europe. On the other hand, the moment it binds us hard and fast to follow wherever the other party may wish to go, it ceases to be a guarantee for peace and becomes a menace. It is certain from the official speeches we have heard this week that those who are responsible have no intention of impressing this meaning upon it. We are assured by our friends on the Continent that our policy has been very successful abroad. If this is so, we, as people of common sense, must admit that we have achieved this success by ignoring our interests in the Middle East. This cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely, and the present position opens up possibilities which will have to be faced.

It is common knowledge that our differences with Germany over the Bagdad Railway are in a fair way to settlement; in fact are practically settled save in a few matters of detail. We are to be left in undisputed control of Koweit, and Germany abandons the only claim to which we took grave exception, her control over the last section of the line. But in return we may not unreasonably be required to give an equivalent. The opportunity may not improbably arise in the discussion which will shortly ensue over the claim of the Balkan States to a War Indemnity from Turkey. They are believed to be demanding an amount equivalent to the burden of Turkish debt they will assume proportionately to the territory they acquire. If they are to receive this portion of the Turkish revenues, they will be withdrawing from Turkey an amount of money which will prevent her meeting the kilometric guarantee towards the completion of the Bagdad Railway. The view of the Powers, including France, was at first that this would not be just to the railway and its promoters, as it clearly would not. Russia, however, from her point of view naturally enough is backing the Allies in their claim, and seems now to have secured the support of France, who has no particular interest in the matter herself, but desires to please her ally. Our own position is therefore becoming of great importance. If we support the Triple Alliance, their contention will prevail. If we recede from our original position, the outcome is doubtful; but it is not doubtful that we should sacrifice the growing disposition in Germany to a friendly arrangement. We do not believe that France will seriously demand such a sacrifice. It would be directly opposed to the whole spirit which animates the sagacious and prudent references to the President. Our relations with France alone have not demanded that we should sacrifice any of our interests in Persia or the regions of the Orient. Nothing can more injure the Entente in the eyes of the British people than the development of a conviction that we are allowing ourselves to be made pawns in anybody's game. This is certainly not the view of M. Poincaré as embodied in his speeches. With his acute sense of what is fitting, he would probably be the first to note the extreme impropriety of an allocution *urbi et orbi* put forth this week by a leading Nonconformist and supporter of the Government urging Germany to restore Alsace-Lorraine. The spread of a conviction that this is the object of the Entente or the general view of the party in power here would more than anything else jeopardise European peace. But nothing could be less like the general impression made on the world by the attitude either of guest or hosts.

THE UNIONIST LAND POLICY.

WE should be a little less than human if we did not warmly welcome Lord Lansdowne's speech at Matlock Bath on Saturday. It stands as an authentic and powerful document, firmly outlining the Unionist policy on the English land question; and, almost line by line and word by word, it completely bears out what the SATURDAY REVIEW has insisted on.

We were waiting for a statement of the kind. It was known that the chairman of the meeting, a great English landowner, had come to believe entirely in small ownership all over England; and to favour a deliberate plan of small ownership, small free holdership, on a generous scale. But, frankly, Lord Lansdowne went a step further than we expected. Lord Lansdowne is a calculating and very cautious statesman; and some of his party feared, whilst some perhaps—let us pray a dwindling minority—rather hoped that a declaration of Unionist land policy might be indefinitely put off. There is a certain school of thought, or of inaction, which is always for "putting off things" in the Unionist party; and—no doubt with the best of intentions—it wished to put off this declaration of policy on the land question. It has wished to do so even since Mr. Bonar Law quite lately said he believed the settlement in England of a large body of small land cultivators and owners would be the greatest possible blessing to the whole country. Everybody with an atom of common political sense knows of course that there are times when good party leaders must put things off. Leaders who do not study at seasons to go slow and warily are simply bound to find themselves presently in the position of a man on a free-wheel without a brake going down a steep hill. The party machine should be fitted with a strong brake, but we do not want to apply it when we are on a good road along which we have a chance of making excellent running. That, however, is exactly what our friends who are anxious to shelve the land problem propose to do. They would put on the brake hard when a good, straight, safe bit of road lies before us: and they would do this in the name of caution! They murmur "Let us wait till all this disturbing clamour about the village workers has died out, and till, somehow or other, the country has grown richer and the farmers are able of their own accord to give much better wages and the agricultural labourers are satisfied and comfortable". This wait-a-bit-and-see school is indeed nothing new in the party. One recalls Lord Randolph Churchill years ago hitting it off in an angry sentence or two of a great speech. He called it the "Eternal Negative" school, and he went on to warn his friends against it. If you wrap yourself up in it, "your power will go from you, your constituencies will fall away from you, you will be condemned to impotent opposition".

The temptation to put off the land policy has doubtless been considerable. It might have been urged that, after the missing fire of the Lloyd George anti-landowner campaign, there was no need to move yet awhile; moreover that Newmarket had shown the village workers to be so sick with the Radicals there was no need for the Tories to do anything but watch their opponents stew in Insurance juice. But people who would take this line are not really cautious at all.

They are bad and most short-sighted politicians. They have wholly failed to see that the Unionist party has at the present time an extraordinary opportunity. For some reason or from some chance which we do not profess to understand, the whole Radical party and the Government has set itself dead against small ownership and free holdership in land in England. The idea is that the fear not of God but of Socialism has been put into all Radicals and Ministers to a man. It is said they have been ordered at their peril to do nothing to encourage any small man to own any land; that, forsooth, they must not even—except by piling on the death duties and the super-tax—do too much to break up the big estates lest the still more frightful ill of small estates ensue! Something of the kind, we dare say, has influenced the Government. But we do not think that this alone explains, first, Lord Carrington's and now Sir Walter Runciman's miserly and muddled scheme of hiring out to ill-equipped villagers, often at severe rents, land bought uneasily by the County Councils.

Other motives have worked. Possibly the Government has thought that by the hiring plan it could somehow keep more hold on the new men. Or the

Government has favoured the hesitating and tentative policy, honestly not feeling at all sure of its ground or of the country question. It might even be suggested that the Government has rather liked the idea of preserving in some degree larger owners that it might use them as a sort of milch cow on occasion—is it not said that Robespierre favoured some such device?

Whatever the motive or mingled motives, this fact is absolutely clear—the Radical party, every section of it, every leading member of it, is to-day dead set against the English villager owning a bit of land. He may own his pig: he may only rent the sty in which to house it.

The effrontery of the thing is quite amazing. We confess to feeling hot when we contrast what these Radicals grudgingly propose to do for the English villager with what has actually been done, all parties consenting, for the Irish villager.

We are glad indeed then that Lord Lansdowne has come out strongly in favour of a bold scheme of small ownership all over the country. There is no holding back or suggestion of mean reserve in his Matlock speech. He calls his policy "a policy of actual and complete ownership". Its "keystone . . . should be a large increase in the number of persons interested in the land not merely as occupiers but as absolute owners". Lord Lansdowne has looked abroad and found the policy ensuring to France, Germany, Belgium and Denmark a strong, steady and settled peasantry. He might have included Italy in his list and made it still stronger. Wherever in Italy you find plenty of small owners you find progress and good tillage and keenness. Of course you find poverty as well. No informed or honest mind denies it. It is not suggested that we are all going to live happily ever afterwards, like the heroes and heroines in old-fashioned moral stories, when we have got our pig and cow and bit of soil to ourselves. But the point is we shall treat all three better when they belong to us and we belong to them. And we shall not be so anxious to go away and leave them as we are to-day. The point is, too, that we shall discover then that we have something worth staying to look after. Country bacon and country milk—when one can be sure of getting them—are better than town bacon and milk.

Lord Lansdowne does not stop at this point. He sees that the question is very largely in England, as it has been in Ireland, a question of money. To-day—in England—the Radical says, in effect: "No villager, no farmer, shall have the land until he finds one-fifth of the purchase money". It is this, as Lord Lansdowne rightly says, that has proved and is proving the "great stumbling-block in the way of land purchase". The villager cannot find that fifth. If he has it, and pays it out, he enters into possession without a farthing capital with which to farm his holding. If he borrows, he must borrow at a very stiff rate of interest. It is too obvious to every man who knows the English countryman and the English country character that the 20 per cent. advance has smashed the purchase part of the present Small Holdings Act. And then the Government and their friends pretend that the figures in Mr. Cheney's report the other day prove that the English villager does not want to own land at all; but is head over heels in love with his new landlord—the local authority!

We advise Unionists who still have misgivings to read through and weigh the whole of Lord Lansdowne's argument. Coming from a statesman and a landowner so discreet and deliberate, it is about the most convincing we could desire. Lord Lansdowne is so sure of his case that he does not hesitate to propose ample State aid. He says outright, Whenever the right man applies, let us advance the whole of the purchase money at the lowest rate at which a Government can afford to lend it. That is his plan. It is thorough this time! It will do much to settle the best of the English villagers on the soil. It will help to conserve

all that is truly live and sound in our historic land system. The Unionist party should adopt it without faltering. It will prove a great party move, and besides a blessing to England.

INSURANCE AMENDMENT.

MINISTERS seem to imagine that when disaster is possible at a bye-election the situation can be retrieved by a death-bed promise of amendment and repentance. In Somerset, it will be remembered, the Government promised the electors who returned Mr. Herbert an alteration in the condition of outworkers under the Insurance Act, and promptly went back on their word when the constituency was wicked enough to elect a Unionist instead of a Liberal. At Altrincham the Prime Minister intervened, quite unsuccessfully, with a pledge to amend the Insurance Act, and now at Leicester even the Heaven-sent People's Budget, which was to alter the history of humanity, is threatened by Ministerial intervention. The children of this world ought at least to be wise in their generation or the last justification for their existence disappears. Does it never occur to those who guide the destinies of the Coalition that all these eleventh-hour repentances are regarded by the electorate as so many admissions that the original authors of the policies have made grave mistakes, and mistakes which they refused utterly to acknowledge at the time even when pointed out to them in the clearest and most considerate language? The Insurance Act amendments now dangled before the electors of Leicester are part and parcel of this whole system of procedure. The tone of the "regrets" for the Marconi episode is re-echoed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. You are sorry not for something you have done amiss, a most reasonable attitude, for everyone makes mistakes, but because you have been found out, a totally different proposition. These amendments have been wrenched from Ministers by the persistent and growing clamour of the people. What they refused to the voice of reason and to the representation of Unionist members of Parliament two years ago they have now granted to the representations of the Radical agents. They regret and amend some portions of the Act not because these portions are wrong (for this was pointed out to them long ago) but because they are unpopular, a fact they have only discovered recently.

For the rest the majority of the amendments tend in the right direction. As Mr. Worthington-Evans has pointed out, they embody in the main the criticisms passed by the Opposition in Committee—amendments then rejected contemptuously by the Chancellor when on a single night he succeeded in getting a hundred and eleven Unionist suggestions ruled out of order on the ground that they interfered with the finance of the Act! If he had accepted those proposals, an amending Act might have been unnecessary and the Coalition Whips would not now be engaged in wondering whether they can keep a majority together in the House long enough to secure the passage of the Bill. Those Unionists who toiled night and day to improve the original measure, only to have their efforts brushed aside by a lordly nod from Mr. Redmond, will regard the present situation with a certain grim satisfaction. The Chancellor has fallen into the pit which he and his Nationalist master insisted on digging for themselves. But to make a mistake once does not prevent one making it twice, as may presently appear. To introduce an amending Act is to raise the whole question of Insurance anew. To treat that renewed question with the closure and the gag and in the general manner which defaced the passage of the existing Act is to risk a new succession of blunders followed by a new phase of unpopularity. This time the Opposition cannot and will not be silenced, nor would an attempt to withdraw the amending Act on the ground that too many amendments had been proposed from the Unionist benches go down in the country. Once the Act has

to be discussed again it will have to be discussed thoroughly if the people are going to be satisfied with the result. It is on this point that the Opposition should seize, for here they will be voicing the feeling of the whole nation. We are all tired of Government by Coalition necessity, and demand Government by consent and free discussion. The particular matter appeals so deeply both to the sentiment and interests of the whole people that not even the present tyranny under which we are living is strong enough to stand the demand for a full discussion of the working of the Insurance Act. If the Government have given an inch the country will demand an ell, and will, like Ministers, "not be happy until it gets it".

The first opportunity for rediscussing the working of the Act is indeed so grave an occasion that we feel sure that the Opposition will approach it in a serious spirit. The duty of an Opposition is to oppose—what is wrong in the Government proposals. In other words, the claim of an Opposition to become a Ministry rests on its good faith. Now the attitude of the Unionist party on Insurance has always been a perfectly clear one. It has approved the principle of Insurance but it has objected to the method and the detail of the Insurance Act. Unionism has accepted compulsory Insurance, but it has objected to the attempt of imposing by means of the gag and the closure on a great variety of classes with special interests of their own in England a system which Germany has only adopted by degrees after thirty years of experiment. The Opposition then is perfectly justified at every bye-election in bringing before the electors the hard cases for which the Chancellor is responsible and for which he now admits responsibility: it is not justified in taking up any attitude at such elections which might imply that it was opposed to the compulsory principle as such. In this matter the greatest caution should be exercised by a party which clearly will soon be in office. The flagrant dishonesty of Coalition methods of Government and electioneering, and the total failure which has ensued are, and will remain, a testimony against the unwisdom of certain courses of conduct. For this truth even more immediate evidence can be produced in justification. When the correspondent of a great Unionist paper announces that an election is being fought entirely on the Insurance Act, in what circles is the greatest prominence given to the fact? A careful perusal of the Radical Press would supply the answer to the question. Every crime of the Government is whitewashed away by the comment that the Insurance Act, or in one recent instance the Shops Act, is alone to blame. Unionism is represented in consequence not as it is a consistent body of doctrine and a coherent view of what national life should be, but as a temporary and accidental opponent of some particular measure when opposition may mean votes. A worse travesty of the facts it is impossible to imagine; but as the Liberal party probably realises by now, it is a mistake to give the enemy the chance of taking favourable ground. The party stands for the Church and the Union, for Tariff and Social Reform, and it is for these causes that it is fighting at every election whenever that election takes place, and it is for a mandate on its whole and fundamental policy that it is asking when the time of trial comes.

SUB ROSA.

IT will take London some time to recover from its gorge of sentiment, or rather sentimentality, over Rose Day and the Entente Cordiale; for, to quote the "Times", "the festival was linked arm-in-arm with the ceremonies attending the visit of the French President". The author of this delightful phrase evidently had in his mind's eye a vision of all the rose-girls (who verily must have totted up to thousands, to judge from their omnipresence) marching arm-in-arm with M. Poincaré. They no doubt would have been only too willing, but M. Poincaré, we fancy, would have fled in terror back to France; which would have been an undignified

finish to the fraternal or sororal festival. Our masters of journalese, large and small, have had a really Royal time this week. An anthology of their purple bits would be stupendous, if one could survive the making of it; they were able to flounder not only in English but in French. Every scribe of every rag had his French tag. Ollendorf, or whatever now takes the place of Ollendorf, must have been tremendously in demand during the last six months while the journalists were preparing for this week. But have we not seen somewhere "French taught while you wait"? What crowds there must have been there! If M. Poincaré read our "Mirrors" and "Mails", or even less ragged "organs", for there was plenty of penny hysterics as well as halfpenny, not to speak of twopenny, he would go back thinking us the greatest nation of drivellers on the face of the earth. But happily he has not time to read them.

The one paper which had something really amusing to say about the rose business was the "Westminster Gazette", amusing because of its desperate ingenuity in giving a courtier turn to truth. The "Westminster" knows what Rose Day really is, but has not the hardihood either to lie about it or to tell the truth about it; so it does a little of both. "All of us have to submit to-day to a pleasant blackmail." "Blackmail" is straight; but it is "sweetened by the thought that the gains of the practice are to aid deserving charities". "Gains of the practice" is good. "Blackmail", "gains of the practice", what sort of an impression do these phrases leave? Not a very pleasant one—distinctly one of offence. When we speak of a practice, tout simple, somehow we always mean a bad practice. When was "these practices" ever said in approval? And "have to submit to"—here again the truth will out. The victim of the nuisance—belaid, poor man, and bothered and belated a hundred times getting down to Tudor Street—is too much for the courtier. To this woman-hunted man the nuisance may have been, as he says, "sweetened" by the thought that his penny was extracted in the name of Charity, but it is a sweetness which all the same he had to "submit to"; just as a cat submits to caresses he is despising; but the cat would not trouble to call the caresses sweet. Finally, the writer becomes serious: "There are undesirable elements about these street collections". This obvious truth—never so obvious as on Wednesday except on Rose Day in last year—had to be gilt-edged. So he turns full courtier at last and "overlooks" all "in respectful homage". God and Mammon are thus served satisfactorily.

We should like to know this: Why are these Rose Day flower-girls to be allowed to do with impunity what any of their hard-working sisters, under no ægis but necessity, would be "moved on" for doing, roughly enough? It is more than possible that worse things than moving on would come upon them. Why should these "rose-maidens" be allowed to accost men to their infinite annoyance? We will give them their due and admit that in our experience they were not quite so insistent as they were last year. They were an intolerable nuisance, constantly in the way, but most of them were content with a "No", or rather they took a "No" and did not follow one down the street begging. None the less, you were requested to buy; it was impossible to escape solicitation. "Only what happens at every bazaar". Just so, and most of us do not hold bazaars to be Elysium. But at any rate no one need go into a bazaar if he does not wish. It is a very different thing when all London is turned into a bazaar; to have to spend a whole day in it; to hear nothing but bazaar all day, to read nothing but bazaar, and to see nothing but bazaar. If the organisers of Rose Day made it known that they would compound with the public and spare us the nuisance next year, provided a sum equalling the amount paid over this year to charity (all figures on the table) was subscribed before Easter, they should get their money easy. Certainly we would quadruple our Hospital Sunday donation to be rid of Rose Day.

But do the hospitals gain really by the Day? What evidence have we? What proportion do the expenses bear to what the hospitals get? Where are the figures? We do not remember any audited (or un-audited) balance sheet and account being published. A statement was made; which is a very different thing. It is easy to make a statement; to say in lump so much was raised by sales and so much was paid to charity. But only details given in regular form can show what the administration of this fund is. There are stories of waste, of absurd mismanagement, of secretarial muddle. Let us have cards on the table. But, be the business never so well managed, cannot the clever people behind it see how easily this Rose Day collection can be made an excuse for not giving at other times? Half a crown given on Rose Day, in face of the sun and the seller, makes a much braver show than half a sovereign put into the Hospital Sunday bag or even plate. Also, importunity, if successful with the unjust, may put off the just. The man who gives willingly, and means to give, is inclined to say he will not give if urged and pestered and worried. What do the hospitals themselves say? Do those who have to run them welcome Rose Day as an unqualified boon? Have the Rose Day organisers ever consulted the hospital managers and tried to get their real opinion? We should much like to know what they think. But naturally it is difficult to get anybody's real view of this function; probably the originators of the movement know less than most what is really thought about it. They certainly cannot learn from the newspapers.

It may be motives do not count. Perhaps the only question is, does Rose Day pay? Hospital financiers no doubt may say, it is not our business to inquire why people give, so long as they do give. Their motives are for themselves; their money is for us. We may be very simple, very childlike, but we confess we do not like the idea of the hospitals receiving money given under false pretences. Is it cynical to doubt that some seller or buyer on Wednesday may not have been thinking exclusively of the hospitals in doing it? No doubt all the maidens of the Rose Queen (in the slang of the day) from mere single-eyed love of the hospitals joined this fashionable movement and took their stand on the pavement, clothed in white livery, and looking "Are we nothing to you all ye that pass by?" How like they were, these dainty maids, to those who go unnoticed and unknown amongst the sick and poor, whose service no half-penny journalist wreathes with flowery drivel! The buyers' motives are easily diagnosed. The hospitals are not the main thing, obviously, for if anyone cares for the hospitals he can and will give without any fuss. In the busy parts most of the men buy a rose simply to escape being molested; most of the women to be in the swim. In the poorer parts the novelty catches; a certain rough chivalry to a lady; or, when the seller is of their own kind, the youths enjoy chaffing and larking with her. But do the great ladies who go on the streets on this day realise why they are there? They are there as draws; they are the prizes in a lottery. Men with an appetite for snobbery learn from the papers (the names and pitches are carefully advertised) that certain peeresses, actresses and dancing girls are turning hawker for that day. They go out on the hunt for them, and hope by spending a certain sum to be able to say they have received a rose from the hand of a "titled lady", who possibly even pinned it in his buttonhole. He will be able to tell this to his grandchildren. Probably in fact neither duchess nor countess did it; he would not know them, and it is a hundred to one he buys his roses from some nonentity. Still, he thinks she was a duchess, so he is happy.

This strikes us as rather a degraded way of supporting hospitals. If we cannot raise the money for them without an appeal to snobbery, better, many will think, let the State take over and have done with these "charity" methods.

THE CITY.

ON Saturday last the Stock markets seemed to be bordering on panic. A fresh bout of liquidation had swept away all support; prices were tumbling and the possibility of another half-dozen failures was discussed. The weakness was due largely to the situation in the Near East, while selling of stock in connexion with June options was a contributing factor. Fortunately a much better tone has been manifest this week. News from the Balkans was considered more encouraging; the liquidation ceased, and a fair supply of buying orders from investors was accompanied by bear covering. Whereas there had previously been no support, it was found that very little stock was on offer at the low level. Quotations bounded up so sharply that the fear of another calamitous fortnightly settlement was dispersed.

Naturally the upward movement could not continue indefinitely. Higher prices were sure to bring out salvage stock. News of the resumption of hostilities in Macedonia was the signal for a halt; but technical market conditions were probably chiefly responsible for a temporary reaction in prices.

The careful preparations effected by the banks to meet the monetary demands which usually attend the turn of the half-year will no doubt prevent any undue stringency. It is particularly satisfactory that the gold reserves of the Imperial Bank of Germany have been raised to a level which precludes danger. Next month the large release of funds in payment of interest should permit a general relaxation of money rates; but it is doubtful whether this will be more than temporary. It will soon be necessary to prepare for Egyptian requirements in connexion with the cotton crop—which will be almost, if not wholly, a record. Later on America may need gold for the movement of the harvests, and the Brazilian demand will also have to be taken into consideration.

The Stock market barometer, however, is rising. There may be occasional periods of depression and the situation still lacks any incentive to pure speculation, the more so as the Stock Exchange rules in regard to commissions now render speculation a rather expensive hobby; but purchasers who intend to pay for stock and who use reasonable care in the selection of their securities may rest assured that they will eventually reap a fair profit. A considerable amount of "small" business has been done in the last fortnight, and the great bulk of the stock has been taken up, so that the speculative open account remains very low.

Home Railway securities are liable to occasional bouts of liquidation, which should now become less frequent, while dividend prospects are an encouraging influence and satisfactory yields are obtainable on the good-class stocks at present prices.

Canadian Pacifics seem to have lost the buoyancy which has been their characteristic for so many months. Traffic receipts now compare with remarkable increases obtained a year ago, and the latest figures provide no spectacular features; especially when the rise in operating expenses is taken into account. Latest crop reports, however, are encouraging. Grand Trunks also lack the support which was particularly in evidence a few months ago.

In Wall Street serious hopes are now entertained of a solution of the Harriman "dismerger" problem. It is rather difficult to judge whether the Union Pacific Company will make a good bargain by exchanging part of its Southern Pacific holding for the Pennsylvania's holdings of Baltimore and Norfolk stocks; perhaps some sacrifice will be necessary in order to escape from the legal maze which has grown up around the Union and Southern Pacific Companies. Although business in New York remains at a low ebb there are distinct signs of returning confidence which will assist the railroads in the various financing schemes now under consideration.

A cautious attitude is being adopted toward Mexican securities, although too much reliance should not be

attached to the news of rebel successes which reaches this country via New York. The foreign railway section has witnessed further liquidation, but still invites a fair amount of support from speculative investors.

In the Mining markets the effect of the labour troubles on the Rand has been offset by a batch of excellent dividends. The De Beers distribution of 20s. on the deferred shares has given satisfaction. Sir Starr Jameson's election to the presidency of the Chartered Company was followed by good buying, though the shares still stand below par.

The sharp rally that has occurred in the Rubber share market supplies welcome indication that this department is not devoid of support in spite of the fall in the price of the commodity. It is also cheering to find Mr. Lampard still optimistic.

Oils are very quiet now that the interesting dividends have all been declared, but Shells are regarded as a favourable lock-up purchase in well-informed quarters.

THE PANAMA ROBBERY.*

M. BUNAU-VARILLA'S book comes at an opportune moment, now that the opening of the Panama Canal is heralded as an early forthcoming event; he writes as an actor who has taken a decisive part in the developments and vicissitudes of the last thirty years or so; indeed, if one accepts the view of the book, the conclusion must be arrived at that without the author's untiring vigilance and permanent and unerring intervention there would be no Panama Canal at all. The present work is a trilogy, "the creation, destruction and resurrection", which, as far as titles go, reminds one of "Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained", only that Milton's title starts, taking the creation for granted, in *mediis rebus* as it were.

The keynote to the author's aim and method is to be found in the dedication to his children: "May this book bring home to you what I have always striven to impress upon you, that the greatest virtue in a Frenchman is to cultivate truth and to serve France!" No doubt the two precepts, when France is being served, must always be concurrent and inseparable, for it would be inconceivable that truth, that is to say righteousness, should be absent from the service of France. All that is very fine; very fine, as far as it goes. The only shortcoming, not a small one indeed, lies in the vagueness and elusiveness of the terms; such is always the trouble with abstract principles of morality; solemnity of enunciation does not endow them with precision of meaning; they are both elastic and adaptable to the requirements of the hour, and can be made to cover a multitude of sins, selfishness, avarice, even iniquity, under the plea of serving truth and the fatherland.

If the accuracy and completeness of the information may on occasions be doubted, not so the sincerity of the writer; primarily and essentially he is writing of himself; it is the case of an Achilles who is his own Homer, the whole attuned to harmonise with the prosaic capitalistic atmosphere of the age. Other fairly famous campaigners of yore, Xenophon and Julius Cæsar, have also taken the world into their confidence; but they have done so in a more chastened and less aggressive spirit of autobiography; in the "Anabasis" and in the "Commentaries" the ten thousand and the legions have a local habitation and a name of their own; they are not mere puppets in the evolution of a higher and all-absorbing destiny. M. Bunau-Varilla's attitude throughout is that of Chanticleer; the sun ever rises at his bidding:

"J'ai tellement la foi, que mon cocorico
Fera crouler la Nuit comme une Jéricho".

The avowed aim of the book is: "To explain how that great conception of French genius, the junction of

the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, was snatched from her; and that the solution of the problem of the opening of a Free Strait between the two oceans was her work and hers alone". Engineers and men of science in Europe and America may, and certainly will, dispute and wrangle as to the solution of the problem and as to whom the glory is rightfully due; but the assertion that the junction of the two oceans is the "great conception of French genius", thus implying exclusive originality, should not have been translated into English and can only be meant for home consumption in France.

The quest for a natural passage between the two oceans began immediately upon the discovery of the Pacific by Balboa on 25 September 1513. Balboa himself, we are told by M. Bunau-Varilla, "nursed the ambition of finding a passage between the two seas"; and further on he adds, "the idea of connecting Nature was mooted, but Philip the Second forbade any modification of what God had created"; thus M. Bunau-Varilla himself shows that "the great conception" was a centenarian idea before French genius took it up.

Saavedra Ceron, one of Balboa's companions in Darien, seems to have been the first one to conceive the idea of constructing an artificial waterway between the two oceans, having prepared plans for the work at Darien about 1525 to 1530. In 1534 Charles the Fifth ordered the exploration of the Chagres Watershed for the purpose of connecting that river with the Southern Sea. The Governor of Tierra Firme reported in due course "that it would be practically impossible to construct a canal across the Isthmus, and that the attempt would ruin the richest treasury in Christendom". In 1565 Jorge Quintanilla obtained a charter from the Spanish Crown "to open a water passage between the two oceans". Soon thereafter a change came over the royal mind and Philip the Second forbade all further mootings of canal projects under penalty of death. About that time it was discovered that the upper waters of the Atrato, which empties into the Gulf of Uraba, in the Caribbean, flow quite close to the Pacific; this gave rise to a suggestion of digging a canal to connect the Atrato with the ocean, upon which the Jesuit historian, José de Acosta, observes "that it would be offending the Creator to seek to connect an ocean and a river which He had placed asunder".

It is interesting to note the recent bid by the United States, in their effort to "corner" all possible trans-oceanic canals on the American continent, for this self-same canal by way of the Atrato; it may be safely assumed that in this less reverent age the scruples of Father Acosta will not be a serious obstacle to the construction of this canal, which, in the opinion of many well-informed people, would much improve on the Panama in cheapness and efficiency.

French genius seems to appear for the first time in connexion with canal projects in 1785, when a certain M. de la Nauërre submitted a paper to the Academy of Sciences in Paris with a complete plan for the construction of the canal across Panama, at an estimated cost of one million francs. Count Florida Blanca, Minister of Charles the Third of Spain, "did not consider the report as deserving of serious consideration", which, in view of the smallness of the cost, is to be lamented; it is also to be regretted that later French canal creators and their technical progeny should not have profited by their compatriot's wisdom and example at least in the direction of pecuniary demands.

The "creation" and the "destruction" make an interesting narrative from the formation of the Panama Company in 1881 to the offer to sell the works and the concession to the United States in 1898. In 1884 M. Bunau-Varilla "finally resolved to consecrate his life to the Panama Canal"; he assumed "entire management when he was twenty-six"; he "discovered the secret of the Straits", and his discovery "freed the future of the canal". The history of the great undertaking becomes inseparable from his own personal history; he solves the technical problems, he smooths the furrows of administration, he fights the battles of Panama against Nicaragua and the battles of the

* "The Creation, Destruction and Resurrection." By Philippe Bunau-Varilla. London: Constable, 1913. 12s. 6d. net.

company against political intrigue in France; he writes a book, another trilogy, "Le Passé, Le Présent et L'Avenir", to inflame anew the waning ardour of French investors; he seeks the aid of Russia, and when the destruction is achieved by "judicial machinery" and by "parliamentary machinery", and the Canal Company, so to speak, throws up the sponge and offers to sell, he stands undaunted on the desolate stage amidst the crumbling ruins of his mighty dream.

Whatever may have been the company's mistakes, the technical errors of engineers and of managers, and the real facts which led to the accusation that eventually brought about the downfall of the company, the pluck and the devotion of the men at the Isthmus, the work which they actually achieved, and their indomitable energy in the presence of the insidious and murderous scourge of yellow fever stand as a testimony to the best traditions of France. M. Bunau-Varilla shares the full honour thus acquired for his country.

The issues of these days have none but an historical interest now. Later events have brought fundamental changes, not only in the ownership of the canal but in its status as a factor of incalculable possibilities in the immediate development of international life both in the New World and in the Old.

Panama, it should be remembered, formed part of Colombia. In 1846 Colombia, then New Granada, fearing British inroads, concluded a treaty with the United States by which the States guaranteed Colombia's sovereignty on the Isthmus. In 1850 the clashing rivalries of Great Britain and the United States culminated in a compromise embodied in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, by which, whilst neither nation became supreme, equality of position and of rights for both was maintained. This arrangement was never popular in the United States. The American mind—official and otherwise—was early made up that no canal should be built but an American canal.

The concession by Colombia to a Frenchman, the formation of a French company, the starting of the work, were received unfavourably in the United States. The collapse of the French company offered a golden opportunity to acquire the concession and the works. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, however, stood in the way; Colombia's rights mattered nothing; no sane nation hesitates where there are no big battalions.

The "resurrection" tells how the United States Government under M. Bunau-Varilla's guidance and inspiration "did the needful" for the success of a bloodless revolution in Panama, the formation of a new Republic and its recognition by the Powers; it also tells of the signing by M. Bunau-Varilla, turned Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, of the treaty granting the transfer of the canal concession to the United States, as well as the required political jurisdiction over the canal zone and enabling them to pay the stipulated price of forty million dollars to the Canal Company and to prepare the ground for an abundant crop of surprises, some of them "shockers" which have begun to crystallise, such as the Panama Act regulating the tolls, against which Great Britain has protested, and the construction of fortifications— forbidden in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty—for which the first few millions have been voted by the American Congress.

One incident out of many should suffice to show the supple and irresistible action of M. Bunau-Varilla, verging on hypnotism, in furtherance of his plans. He had "conceived the complete plan for the Panama revolution"; the plan had to be carried out by the United States. M. Bunau-Varilla trained his mental artillery upon Secretary of State Hay; from the moment that the interview was granted the Secretary was a doomed man. Colombia obdurately refused to ratify the Hay-Herran Treaty, which would have enabled the United States to buy the concession. The interview is thus described:

"Together we deplored the blindness of Colombia. . . ."

"When all counsels of prudence and friendship have

been made in vain", I said, "there comes a moment when one has to stand still and await events." "These events", he asked, "what do you think they will be?"

"I expressed my sentiments on the subject some days ago to Mr. Roosevelt", I replied. "The whole thing will end in a revolution. You must take your measures, if you do not want to be taken yourself by surprise."

"Yes", said Mr. Hay. "That is unfortunately the most probable hypothesis, but we shall not be 'caught napping'."

Before closing the interview an illuminating and touching incident occurred:

"I have just finished reading", said Mr. Hay, "a charming novel, 'Captain Macklin'. It is the history of a West Point cadet who leaves the Military Academy to become a soldier of fortune in Central America. He enlists under the orders of a General, a former officer of the French Army, who commands a revolutionary army in Honduras. The young ambitious American and the old French officer are both charming types of searchers after the ideal. Read this volume; take it with you", concluded Mr. Hay. "It will interest you."

"I read 'Captain Macklin' with an interest which may be easily imagined. . . . I could not help thinking that Mr. Hay, in giving me this volume, had meant to make subtle allusion to my own efforts in the cause of justice and progress. Did he not wish to tell me symbolically that he had understood that the revolution in preparation for the victory of the Idea was taking shape under my direction?"

And so on and so on. Thus did Secretary Hay take his orders, which achieved the revolution under the direction of M. Bunau-Varilla, who in his turn was serving Justice, Progress, the Idea, and, naturally, Truth and France. All this involved, from the point of view of Mr. Hay's Government, the flagrant violation of the nation's solemnly pledged word.

It is said that Renan, lecturing once on Nero at the Collège de France, before closing, added, as in mitigation of any undue severity of judgment: "Mais ce pauvre jeune homme était nourri d'une si mauvaise littérature". In the case of Secretary Hay, and perhaps of M. Bunau-Varilla, mercy should temper the judgment of history. A diet of penny dreadfuls (or dime novels, as they are called in America) and Presidential messages, such as flourished at that time, cannot but engender disaster and confusion.

M. Bunau-Varilla set to work; he wrote minute instructions for the immediate outburst of the revolution; he prepared the cables to be sent announcing the glorious birth of the new nation; he wrote the stirring proclamation of independence and the constitution of the new Republic; having labelled and numbered all these documents to avoid mistakes, he despatched his emissary to the Isthmus. That was not all. He tells us "Madame Bunau-Varilla remained in her room in the greatest secrecy the whole day, making the flag of liberation".

Even so, in olden days the flags and pennants of the Norsemen in their piratical expeditions were embroidered by matrons and golden-haired maidens, in the seclusion of their castles; they listened whilst they worked to the songs which told of the exploits of their men-folk who were not vicariously heroic nor indulged in cant of search for Truth or of the Ideal, but in pillage pure and simple.

Mr. Roosevelt claims that Colombia's rejection of the Hay-Herran Treaty forced him to "take the Isthmus". The treaty expressly stated that it required congressional approval in Colombia, which naturally meant that the possibility of rejection had been accepted. To argue that the rejection justified violence is to proclaim the doctrine of "heads I win and tails you lose", immoral and dishonest, whether practised by individuals or by nations.

Both Mr. Roosevelt and M. Bunau-Varilla maintain that without the "taking of Panama" by the United States the canal would have been lost. Idle excuse. What really was in danger was the combination by

which the forty million dollars could find their way into certain hands.

In his eager search for truth, in the service of France, M. Bunau-Varilla may have overlooked this fact. His own testimony, however, establishes beyond doubt the pecuniary signification of the revolution at Panama; surely neither he nor Mr. Roosevelt held any shares in the enterprise—for that would qualify adversely the single-mindedness of their purpose. On p. 325 of his book M. Bunau-Varilla writes: "A revolutionary movement ending successfully would necessarily about treble the quotation in these securities" (the Panama securities).

The canal is not yet made; ugly rumours of landslides and fears of volcanic disturbances are frequently circulated. The disinterested dreamers and idealists like Mr. Roosevelt and M. Bunau-Varilla are still waiting for the advent of reality; but the three hundred per cent. was pocketed long ago, and doubtless ere this has flourished and fructified in similar enterprises, perhaps in Madagascar, in Tripoli or in Morocco.

The blunder of Great Britain in consenting to the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty is taking a sinister appearance now that the Panama Act has been ratified by the American Congress and the money for the fortifications has been voted. Lord Lansdowne's pusillanimity is coming home to roost.

"MARCONI" IN THE STREET.

By O. M. HUEFFER.

I HAVE devoted the past ten days to testing, as far as one man may, the popular feeling in parts of London, the suburbs and the Home Counties concerning the Marconi deals. I cannot claim that the result is at all exhaustive; it is at least free from any bias, one way or the other. I visited four clubs and some thirty public-houses. I travelled a hundred miles by tram, tube, motor-bus and railway; I chatted with close upon a hundred people drawn from all classes of society, except indeed the uppermost, who are too few in number to be considerable. That I might not draw my conclusions from city dwellers only I made two quite considerable tours—the one suburban, through Clapham, Battersea, Tooting, Merton, Mitcham, Croydon, Woolwich, Greenwich and so on; the other through a small section of the Home Counties, by motor-bus to Hatfield, with a stop-off at Barnet; thence by road to Hertford, Essendon, Ware, Broxbourne, and back by train to Liverpool Street. I engaged as many as possible in conversation, gradually drawing them towards the desired point—whether they were extremely ready to accompany me—and without giving them cause to suppose that I was a journalist. As I am an ingenuous-looking young man, on the stout side, inclined to shabbiness, as my female relatives assure me, and with a singularly vacuous expression, as my male friends love to insinuate, I think I am justified in believing that not one of the human fountains into which I dipped my bucket had any suspicion of the purpose to which I devoted the stream of acquired knowledge. The English are said to be shy and reserved. This may be true of the "upper" and "upper-middle" classes, though only partially. It certainly is not of the rest, unless indeed the name "Marconi" is as an "Open Sesame!" throwing back all bolts and bars.

To begin by generalising. I believe that the "scandal" has, without any doubt whatever, had a very bad effect upon the prospects of the present Government at the next general election if it comes soon. I believe that, unless it makes up its mind to maroon at least one of the offending Ministers, it must expect a really disastrous loss of prestige and of following. I believe—I speak only, be it remembered, of London, the suburbs and the Home Counties, and of only a small fraction of them—that unless that one Minister sacrifices himself or is sacrificed, the Government will be overwhelmed, not by popular wrath or disgust, but

by what is very much more difficult to withstand—popular derision and mild contempt. I say this not in any sense as agreeing to any such popular verdict, but as expressing the verdict of the ninety-and-nine, chosen, be it remembered, by the casual lot cast by proximity on a motor-bus seat, in a saloon bar, or during a roadside chat. Their belief, as expressed in no uncertain words, may be roughly summarised as follows: All politicians are politicians only for what they can make out of it. The Liberals have made the greatest professions. We have foolishly believed that they were sincere in their attacks upon wealth, "get-rich-quickly" finance, Stock Exchange gambling, and the like. We find that, under the shadow of such protestations, they are falling over each other to make money through being "inside". We do not know a tenth of the real facts. Three of them have been shown up; the rest who have managed to conceal their speculations are probably the worst of the gang. Let us give the other side a chance. They are probably as bad; at least, if they are thieves, they are not hypocrites as well. Perhaps seventy-five per cent. of those with whom I spoke voiced some such opinions, quite irrespective of their politics, whatever they may have been. And I honestly believe that in ninety per cent. this belief is entirely due to the fact that members are now paid for their services. I express no opinion as to the good or ill of payment of members; that it has had a most disastrous effect upon the respect in which the Mother of Parliaments is held by the common people I have no doubt whatever. "Mean to stick to their £400 a year whatever happens" was a sentence which, with variations, occurred time after time, occasionally rounded off with the envious addendum, "I don't blame them, either".

Another curious detail which faced me at every point was the width—I will not say depth—of anti-Semitism. There was nothing virulent or bitter about it, as you find in Germany. It was rather amiably contemptuous—the "Sheenie" was outside the ordinary human considerations. He could not run straight if he wanted to. He was not to blame for it; it was his nature. Largely owing to this inborn belief, Mr. Lloyd George came off rather easily. A simple soul himself, he had been led away by the "Sheenies", and as such deserved not blame, but contemptuous pity. He had been a successful politician, done very well for himself, put away a heap of plunder, as was only to be expected. Then—he had fallen into the hands of the "Sheenies", and made a fool of himself.

Let me now come from the general to the particular. I will leave out of the question the obvious Tories, who, with scarcely an exception, voiced, as was only to be expected, the familiar "swindling little Welsh attorney" view. Of the rest, in all my peregrinations I came upon not more than perhaps a dozen who with any earnestness took up the cudgels in the defence. One of them was a respectably dressed man of the tradesman type, who sat beside me on a tramcar crossing Mitcham Common towards Croydon. He firmly believed that the whole esclandre was a purely calumnious campaign, invented for party purposes by the "Daily Express", against which paper he had, for some reason, a violent prejudice. Another was a tobacconist from whom I bought cigarettes in Ware. He believed that the incriminated Ministers had gambled in Marconi shares, and could see no earthly reason why they should not take advantage of the chances Providence threw in their way. He also, by the way, regarded Mr. Lloyd George as the innocent victim of the "Sheenies". Three other professed Liberals: an artisan, probably a foreman in some engineering works, I thought, whom I met in a public-house in Greenwich; a minister, of what sect I do not know, except that he was certainly not Church of England, with whom I forgathered in Greenwich Park; and an agricultural labourer (as I suppose) with whom and a friend of the same class I shared lunch in a gravel-pit on the main road between Essendon and Hertford, were more severe in their strictures than were the professed Tories

of the less prosperous classes. These last seemed for the most part, indeed, to regard the whole affair as something of a joke, with the proviso that it was only what one would have expected.

Quite a number of my victims, among them a commercial traveller staying at the "Salisbury Hotel" in Hertford, a middle-aged woman on the motor-bus going from Croydon to Woolwich, the conductor of the same motor-bus, and so forth, declared that our sole hope of salvation lay in what they called, without I think any very clear idea of what the words meant, "a Business Government".

I have not further space to devote to particular instances. To sum up, I should say that the position as regards the common people is, with the limits I have drawn, something as follows: They know little and care less about the facts, holding that the newspaper accounts, Committee Reports—all three of them—statements and votes in the House are all party lies together. They have a feeling of contemptuous pity for Mr. Lloyd George, because he has shown himself less clever than they believed. They have a feeling of mild condemnation for Sir Rufus Isaacs, because they hold that he has shown himself more clever than his fellow-Minister, a feeling they base not upon any facts but upon his nationality. Anti-Semitism, of a tolerant type however, has received a great impetus among them. Their respect for and faith in the Commons and for both the great parties has received a blow from which they are not likely to rally for a long time to come. Unless the Ministry decide upon a sacrifice—deserved or undeserved—it will pay heavily at the next elections. That sacrifice need not be Mr. Lloyd George, for the reasons I have stated, nor Lord Murray, of whom they have heard little and for whom they care less.

DECORATIONS.

By FILSON YOUNG.

THE other day I saw a man, with a handcart drawn up at the side of the footpath, searching along the kerb. Presently he discovered an iron plate which he removed, disclosing a square hole or shaft. He then took from the handcart a long pole wrapped round with Turkey red. This, with the assistance of a comrade, he raised and stepped in the empty hole, securing it in an upright position by means of large wedges which he had brought with him in the cart. On the pole, seven feet from the ground, was a hook to which he attached a shield painted with three heraldic lions. Then he departed.

The pole was one of some thousands which had been dragged forth from their place of storage and were at this same moment being set up along certain London thoroughfares. They were in no sense beautiful or useful objects, but they were symbols of joy. The square shafts in the ground and the iron covers were eloquent of a brilliant prevision on the part of some official. Formerly this erection of poles was treated as an exceptional thing, not likely ever to occur again; and holes were dug in the streets for the poles and were filled up again when the joy was over. But a prophetic official said, "Gladness may visit us again; it would be better to spend a little capital in preparing for it than to waste income in the moment of surprise". So the holes were dug and built up once for all in the proper way, and the iron covers aforesaid fitted to them; and there under the dust they lie through the dull processionless days in order that at the coming of an official visitor our joy may be fulfilled in as short a time, and at as slight a cost, as possible. Yet it is not joy alone, but time and labour also which these poles represent. Someone had carefully wound round them that faded and tattered Turkey red; someone had roughly fashioned and gilded the pointed ornament which sat at a rather drunken angle at the top; other people had dug and lined the socket in which it was set in the closely

paved streets; and in foundries and in the glare of furnaces men had toiled and sweated to cast the iron covers that fitted into the holes. Others had sewn and fastened miles of flags to miles of rope so that they might be hoisted on the poles; and when all this was done the irregular strings of colour ran in two lines on either side of the leafy thoroughfares. And all this because the French President was coming to visit England.

Truly they are rather sorry things, these Venetian masts, and when I see them brought out again into the daylight I am apt to entertain a sense of oppression at the sight of so elaborate and clumsy a method of expressing festivity. But it is difficult to know what else to do. It does not make me glad to see a red mast standing at the corner of my street, nor when I am glad or elated, or wish to pay anyone a compliment, am I conscious of any impulse to set up a pole on its end. It is a purely artificial arrangement for advertising joy. And in this the Venetian masts and strings of flags are unlike most decorations which are expressions of gladness. Decorations imply a heightening of our sense of life. They take many forms, but chiefly are expressed in noise and colour. When a baby has a heightened sense of life it beats with a spoon on the table. When we have it we cause music to be played, and guns to be fired, and certain highly combustible chemicals to be detonated in the air; and most of all do we make haste to add colour to life by hanging out fragments of gaily coloured cloth. The whole thing is extraordinarily childish when you consider it, but that is because joy is a childish thing, and there is no really sophisticated way of expressing it. Thus it happens that sober Corporations and County Councils, from whom joy is alien, embark with due care and organisation, and on a gigantic scale, upon this business of digging holes in the ground and erecting poles and flags—the very game that little children are sometimes punished for playing. It is a question whether the result is worth the expense, for in this as in so many other things, it is the spontaneous acts of individuals, and the outbursts of private enthusiasm of colour and decoration along the route which make the scene gay, and if these be absent the official poles and wisps of bunting are apt to have rather a plaintive appearance.

But is there no better way of doing it? We must admit the necessity, for these symbols have become an international fashion and to withhold them would be to be guilty of neglect or discourtesy. Somehow I doubt whether we have achieved the right use of flags in public decoration. A decorated ship clothes herself in flags magnificently; but then they are her own familiar wear, and she only dresses herself more richly than usual in the garments to which she is accustomed. Moreover, the sea and the sky are the proper background for flags; there is always something incongruous about them when one sees them against trees and brick walls. Yet even there, if properly used, they may have a splendid effect; and it seems to me that on a State occasion of this kind if every house in the festive area would hang from an horizontal staff one large flag, the effect might be magnificent. And that is another point; the flags used are nearly always too small. The triangular flags that the municipal authorities like to string on miles of rope are ineffective things. They are too small to hang in folds, or stream and wave in the wind as a flag should, and they are often weak in colour and design. It is not necessary to invent fancy flags; those of the international signal code can be endlessly repeated without monotony, and contain all the most striking combinations in blue, white, red, and yellow. On extra-festive occasions in London we run to ropes and garlands of artificial flowers and foliage; but this is very seldom done on a scale lavish enough to be effective. I am not sure that for City decorations flowers are not more suitable than flags. I think that either all flowers or all flags would be better than a combination of the two.

For decoration to be really telling, however, it should be individual and spontaneous. We might decorate ourselves, and dress up the ordinary implements of life as simpler and more childish races do. How gay London would look if, for example, in honour of a visit such as that of the French President, everyone likely to be in the path of his progress would wear a gaily coloured garment or carry a sheaf of flowers! And if all the omnibuses, taxicabs, carriages, and delivery vans were also adorned with flowers and colour, how effective would be the scene; for the life of our streets is really dominated by omnibuses and motor-cars, and the quickest way to decorate the streets would be to decorate the vehicles and people that use them. But I suppose this is all very unpractical, and I dare say if I were put in charge of such things to-morrow I should be obliged to fall back on the weather-beaten Venetian masts, and little shields, and strings of skimpy flags. But it does seem certain that we in England do this kind of thing less well than we do other and more important things. Our failure comes, I dare say, from our essential mistrust of art in any form, and our refusal to take seriously anything that has only to do with beauty and joy. It would not be true or just to say that every distinguished visitor receives the kind of welcome that he deserves; but it is true to say that every community gives the kind of welcome which is characteristic of it. And in our own case we can only hope to make up by the sincerity of our sentiments for our omissions in the lighter matter of decorations.

"ELIZABETH COOPER."

By JOHN PALMER.

"ELIZABETH COOPER" is a play by Mr. George Moore. This seems a necessary explanation. Plays are coming and going with a rapidity and a caprice so confusing that the ordinary playgoer must have given up any attempt to follow their names and fortunes. It is therefore only prudent to explain in advance that "Elizabeth Cooper" is not the new play by Mr. Houghton at the "Apollo" which disappeared so mysteriously a week ago; nor is it the play by Mr. Wilfrid Coleby at the "Vaudeville", whose sudden demise pulled me sharply up in the Strand this week before an empty theatre and vacant boards; nor is it a play from the Hungarian that lived scarcely long enough at the "Savoy" to imprint its name upon my memory. "Elizabeth Cooper" is a play by Mr. George Moore; and it was performed at a meeting of the Stage Society on Monday afternoon.

No one would write about a play by Mr. George Moore if he could possibly help it. The author of "Elizabeth Cooper" is like Mr. Bernard Shaw. A critic who explains to the public why and in what respects plays by Mr. George Moore or by Mr. Bernard Shaw are good or bad is almost certain, sooner or later, to find himself implicitly contradicted in elaborate explanations by their respective authors why and in what respects they are bad or good. These authors are their own critics; and, naturally, they do themselves very much better than any authority from the outside can do them. Mr. George Moore is more deeply read in his subject than I shall ever be, even if I seriously dedicated myself as a solemn life-work to the elucidation of his literary personality. Quite obviously no prudent critic would voluntarily match himself against a competitor who so clearly has the advantage of him, if he could justifiably avoid it. Mr. George Moore is the first living authority upon Mr. George Moore. I have no right to dispute his exclusive knowledge, or his immeasurably greater interest and enthusiasm.

But to avoid Mr. George Moore this week is impossible. All the plays I intended to notice have mysteriously vanished from the boards of London. I am therefore compelled to criticise "Elizabeth

Cooper". I hope I shall be able to do so without committing myself to anything very definite. Far be it from me to record anything beyond vague prejudice. From the removed standpoint of impersonal judgment let us frankly admit in advance that everything which Mr. George Moore will have said twenty years hence about "Elizabeth Cooper" is profoundly true; that only when the last of Mr. Moore's confessions and impressions have issued into print will posterity know how justly to appreciate the play we were privileged to witness on Monday last. Meantime, let me very solemnly warn the admirers of Mr. George Moore not to take his mere plays and novels too seriously. My own idea about him is that after, as he hopes, we have all committed ourselves seriously to admiration, deprecation, or damnation, Mr. Moore will make a last confession of all that will make us all equally ridiculous. He will confess that he only wrote plays and novels in order that he might have something of his own to criticise and to write about—that he only wrote "Esther Waters" because he wanted to tell the public what he thought about "Esther Waters". In the same way Mr. Bernard Shaw may confess that he only wrote plays in order that he might be able to write their prefaces. But we should not believe Mr. Shaw.

When Mr. George Moore's time for confession comes, it will be extremely interesting to hear upon authority why "Elizabeth Cooper" is dated in the 'sixties. So far as date is concerned, "Elizabeth Cooper" plays like an imitation of the latest thing from Vienna—reminding one, as the Stage Society has excellent reason to know, of Schnitzler. Imitation, perhaps, is a harsh word. It would be fairer to imagine an inhabitant of these islands, proud of having lost touch with the English character, self-consciously, but with undoubted skill, naturalising his literary manner somewhere beyond the Channel, half-way between Paris and Berlin. Why, then, the 'sixties of Queen Victoria? In a play by some of our best authors it would be manoeuvring for safety, in a wild hope that what the play lacked in literary smartness or emotional sincerity might be made up on the furniture and costumes. But this will not fit Mr. George Moore. We can only guess. Perhaps the date is a joke. It would be really a good joke, if only we knew it was a joke—so would the agreeable innocence of the stubbornly pre-Ibsen technique. The soliloquies were delightful: so were the careful appearances of every character in the flesh or by letter just as someone on the stage was wondering where he was and what he was doing. But perhaps the date is not a joke. Perhaps it is a deadly serious effort to whitewash the latter half of the nineteenth century. Surely these times, says Mr. Moore, indignant on their behalf, were not so virtuous as their detractors would have us believe. The principal character of Mr. Moore's play is a pleasant fellow with the sort of past which entitles persons on the stage to claim that they understand women. We are not a little startled to hear that the oldest and dearest friend of this principal character was John Ruskin. If this be method, there is not a little madness in it.

There ought to have been one brilliant moment in "Elizabeth Cooper". Notice that I do not positively affirm that, had this moment occurred, it would undoubtedly have been brilliant. I am far too much afraid that hereafter Mr. Moore in a moment of expansion may inform us that the thing could never have come off anyhow. I merely suggest that it *might* have been brilliant, had it occurred; which seems a fairly safe proposition. Let me explain. There are two important men in "Elizabeth Cooper". One is Lewis, a famous author, declined into the vale of years, who lives in England. The other is Sebastian, the famous author's secretary, described in two words as a young fool. There is also Gabrielle, a Viennese Countess. Gabrielle in Vienna falls in love with the reputation and the work of Lewis, the famous author. The famous author, being tired of everything—especially of producing plays and of the women he knows so well—sends his secretary to Vienna to pretend he is the famous author, to produce his play, and to meet the

Countess. The secretary meets the Countess, and in a fit of abstraction he marries her, bringing her back to the famous author's house as the famous author's wife. Naturally we settle ourselves for as lively and as inevitable a *scène-à-faire* as ever was promised to an audience capable of intelligent expectation. What would happen when Gabrielle was told she was not the wife of a famous author, but of the famous author's secretary? (I suppose she was the wife of the famous author's secretary. She had married him as the famous author. Whether you can marry a man thinking he is somebody else depends, I take it, upon local law and custom. Anyhow, the point is immaterial.)

We are ready now for the moment which might have been brilliant. The *scène-à-faire* was at hand. Personally I was making absolutely sure of this *scène-à-faire*. A *scène-à-faire* may be defined as the scene which in plays by an old hand are bound to come; which in plays by a modern author are bound to be avoided. The whole point of pre-Ibsen plays was to write the *scène-à-faire*. The whole point of post-Ibsen plays is not to write it. Mr. George Moore's technique being ostentatiously pre-Ibsen, we naturally made absolutely sure of the *scène-à-faire*. But we reckoned without Mr. Moore's heroine. Mr. Moore's heroine had made up her mind to avoid it. It seems to have been a contest between herself and Mr. Moore whether she should or should not go through with the play as he had obviously intended to write it. Gabrielle stuck at nothing, and Gabrielle prevailed. When the moment came for which Mr. Moore had so carefully prepared her, she looked her author straight in the face and told the most thumping lie I have ever heard upon an English stage. Remember that we were waiting for her to be overwhelmed with a discovery that the famous author's secretary was not the famous author. She was not overwhelmed. She told us she had known all the time.

The audacity of this would beggar the vocabulary of Thomas Urquhart. Of course nobody in the theatre believed her. So far as the position left us able to think at all, we were painfully divided between amazement at the impudence of the woman and commiseration for Mr. Moore, thus heartlessly jilted in the Third Act of the Play he fancied he had written. Nothing was left for him but to ring down the curtain and send us forth into the Haymarket for tea at a comparatively decent hour.

ALL SORTS OF MUSIC.

By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

ON 16 and 23 June as large an orchestra as could be wished for played in Queen's Hall under Nikisch; on 24 June a very small one, accompanied by a choir of thirty-two voices, played in the hall attached to Westminster Cathedral. One has not patience to count the numbers of the London Symphony orchestra, but there seems to be at least one hundred players; and that must suffice. It certainly sufficed me, and after hearing Dr. R. R. Terry's tiny party I feel that it will much more than suffice me in future. I mean that so huge a band seems human energy and exertion misapplied. Had half the gentlemen been engaged in doing something else outside whilst the others fiddled or blew out their souls inside, we should have had quite as effective a performance. Dr. Terry's band nearly took off the roof and shattered the walls of a room holding, I should say, five hundred; the London Symphony never threatened an edifice holding, say, five thousand. That, to anyone gifted with a head for figures, seems to prove the opposite to what I appear desirous of proving. The matter may be put this way: had Dr. Terry multiplied his forces by ten he would have added little to the volume of tone produced; had the Symphony people halved their strength there would have been little difference. The differences in tone quality, after all, if the Symphony band were suddenly reduced to fifty, would not be very surprising: these extra instruments, the viol d'amor,

the librarian, the orchestral attendant, etc., are mere delusions. I believe Mr. Landon Ronald's comparatively small band can create as much of an uproar and do as much damage to the chandeliers as the big Symphony band ever does. In proportion the little Bach group of Dr. Terry did really, I believe, sound much louder—but that is a matter of opinion and ears. Some people have much longer ears than others—some animals also.

This last remark is by the way: at none of the three concerts mentioned was there anything, in Mozart's phrase, to please "long ears". The long-eared kind do not go to listen to such music as Beethoven's "Egmont" overture, his concerto in E flat, his "Heroic" symphony; they do not go to hear Holbrooke's music, Stojowski's manufactures, Tchaikowsky's greatest symphony, Miss Ethel Smyth's songs. In many respects the two concerts of the London Symphony orchestra could not be bettered. In other respects—well, let us consider. It may be granted that Arthur Nikisch is an able conductor. That he is a great one I deny. It would be a pleasure to me to call so earnest a musician a grand master of the orchestra; but his renderings of Beethoven last week were only more nails in the coffin of his reputation as his reputation exists in my brain. He is a well-advertised conductor I know; but that does not alter the fact that his interpretation of the "Heroic" was forced, jerky, unimaginative, and—I am bound to say it—in some respects unintelligent. The gifts that go to the making of a conductor of the first rank cannot be acquired by hard work, hard study or even hard thinking: they are, as I believe Dogberry said of reading and writing, the gift of God. Whether Nikisch studies or does not study his scores, as it is said he does, from dewy dawn to midnight, does not matter at all: in the result his performance does not approach the performances of such lazy chaps as Richter and the late Felix Mottl. Had the "Heroic" been put down to an unknown composer of the name of Smith or Jones, I cannot but think everyone in the hall would have frowned upon it as a pretentious and dull work. The energy, fire, youthful yearning of the first movement were all not there; the terrible tragic (though still youthful, and perhaps I should say mock-tragic) feeling of the funeral march was not there; the requickening in the scherzo and the sublime loveliness of the finale were not there. Nothing was there—only the bare notes. I have heard as good an interpretation of a mighty work under one of the old conductors of the old Philharmonic in the old Philharmonic's oldest and worst days. This is hard criticism, but it is just. The "Emperor" concerto fiasco was not due so much to Nikisch as to Paderewski. Here is another case of a perfectly sincere musician trying to do what is not in him to do and therefore ignominiously failing. I don't suppose that so bad a rendering of the "Emperor" has been given in my time. One need not look far for the reason. Paderewski possesses in almost a supernatural degree the sheer musical faculty; his nervous energy is extraordinary. Of genuine healthy animal force he has next to none; and to the building of Beethoven's giant structures this force went and is wanted in the interpretation. That the concerto itself is a fiasco I cheerfully concede—but for Beethoven's patrons and his dependence on patronage he never would have written in so preposterous a form—a form more formal, from its very birth, than the old *da capo* aria of Handel and Hasse and Bach. Yet much of the music is sublime; and of sublimity Paderewski and Nikisch left not a trace. After all, there is only one kind of music Paderewski can play, and that is Chopin's kind; when he comes to the greatest kind he invariably fails. Even his own concerto is greater than his playing of it—I have heard its best passages better sounded out than ever he has done the thing.

In distinct contrast to this came the last concert of the Symphony orchestra. Beethoven was all very well in his way, but now we were to hear the moderns, so now, if you please, Holbrooke, Stojowski, and the

lady better known in political than musical circles as Dr. Ethel Smyth. Mr. Stojowski I may dismiss in a few words. He has the nastiest, hardest tone on a piano that I have yet been doomed to hear; and his music seems made to fit the tone. It is ingeniously mechanical, and why on earth it should have been written at all baffles the comprehension of anyone possessing the slightest touch of musical temperament. Whether the piano, after Mr. Stojowski had thumped out his concerto, can recover damages for an unprovoked assault is more than I can say—as I am not a lawyer; but I certainly felt inclined to consult a lawyer as to any claim I might have against my friend Mr. Sharpe, the agent for the Symphony orchestra. Such treatment of the piano can only be called brutal, and the music itself is brutal in the sense in which any huge piece of machinery is brutal—it does not mean to be unkind, but woe-betide you if you get caught up in it. Mr. Holbrooke's "Les Hommages" is better as music: some bits are beautiful; but why on earth he, even in his callow youth, should have troubled so to misapply his marvellous ingenuity is to me in itself a marvel. I would rather hear pure Holbrooke than Holbrooke trying to imitate older composers. But in that case it is extremely unlikely that his work would get a performance in this country. Miss Smyth is a difficult composer to deal with. She has industry, brains, technical musicianship—in fact every quality necessary to the making of a fine composer excepting imagination. Her settings of Arthur Symons' three sea lyrics were quite painful to anyone who knew the poetry—and I should think especially painful to those who had known the poet. That Symons was a great poet cannot be claimed; but he had the true feeling of the sea in his blood. He spoke, in his jerky, rapid phrases, much more finely and truly of it than in his poems; but these little lyrics are exquisite. Miss Smyth has passed a steam-roller over them—a steam-roller made in Germany—in Leipzig, to be precise. As for the fourth song, eloquently, not to say magniloquently, sung by Mr. Herbert Heyner, I must tell the truth about it. Telling the truth is a risky business at best; but sometimes it works out well—or might work out well. Take the case, for instance, of the late Mr. Thomas Fury. Some thirty years ago he gave himself up for the murder of someone some twenty years before. All went on in regular form until he pleaded "guilty". The judge had to request him to plead "not guilty"—otherwise Mr. Fury would not get hanged. What would George Washington have done in this situation? He would have replied "My lord, I don't mind committing an occasional murder, but I cannot tell a lie". The judge would have had to reply "You are a scoundrelly assassin but an honourable gentleman: get out of here". I am in G. Washington's position—with a difference. I must tell the truth about Miss Smyth's song, and I shall probably have my house burnt down. Her marching-song suggested to me, mainly by the fury of the orchestration, the crackling of widows' houses and corn-stacks—the reducing to penury of people who had never done any harm to anyone. I have so often given my opinion of Miss Smyth's uninspired music before that I need only say once again that I wonder by what means she gets it performed by such a body as the London Symphony orchestra.

Not much need be said this week about Dr. Terry's Bach concert. The effectiveness of his small choir and orchestra I have already mentioned; and as for the great Johann himself, probably many readers will bless the day when I give over referring to him. Perhaps, however, a few words, rather in the nature of explanation than of criticism, may be permitted. We must not go to concerts of this description expecting gorgeously planned choruses of the B minor mass style: we must go expecting a style of art that is, to many of us, new. Bach's church cantatas are for the most part brief, and the wonder of it is that within such limits he achieved such stupendous things. In "Unto us a child is born" he

works two miracles in two short choruses. Of course we have Handel's colossal chorus to some of the same words, and that is precisely what may deceive us as to the splendour of Bach's setting: Bach wrote for the church and Handel for the concert-room. However, in the Kyrie from one of the little masses—that in G—comparison of no sort was invited, and the effect was tremendous. The Brandenburg concerto in D came off with rattling effect—much greater effect than that gained by the Queen's Hall orchestra when they last gave the work, a year or two ago. The singing last Tuesday was uneven in details, but excellent on the whole. People who won't take advantage of concerts of this sort need not trouble to call them selves musical. They may pay to hear Melba, Caruso and other prima donnas until their faces are blue and their pockets empty; but people who do not know Bach do not know the elements of music.

ANTLERS.

BY SIR HERBERT MAXWELL BART.

NO one interested in British natural history and sport ought to miss the remarkable exhibition of deer-heads organised by "Country Life," arranged by Messrs. Rowland Ward, and shown in the Royal Water Colour Society's Gallery in Pall Mall, for such a representative collection has never before been got together, nor is it likely that so fair an opportunity will recur again of comparing the extremes of dimension in red-deer antlers—the fantastic exuberance developed by warmth and abundant food, as in the head of the great Warnham stag with its thirty-nine points—the baneful effect of severe climate, as shown in the horns from Loch Maddy and Corroul Forest—the noble development of antlers in British red deer acclimatised in New Zealand.

To the owners of Scottish forests the exhibition is not without a melancholy moral, for it shows how Scottish heads have deteriorated within the last hundred years. Except in certain instances where the temporary effect of introducing English or Continental blood among Highland herds may be traced, it would be practically impossible at the present day to match such heads as the ten-pointer from Kinlochewe, shot in 1814, or the magnificent seventeen-pointer from Gordon Castle, shot in 1831. It may be remarked as doubtful whether the Kinlochewe horns, with their extraordinary width of spread, stand now as they originally were set on the animal's head. Probably if the piece of skin covering the junction were removed it would be found that the horns had been sawn from the skull and re-set at a wider angle, with no intention to deceive, but simply to adapt them for decorative purposes.

"It is curious," remarks Mr. Walter Winans in his recent treatise on "Deer-breeding for Fine Heads"—"it is curious that Scotch stags are at the present time the worst in Europe." The real wonder is, having regard to the conditions of climate, exposure and food with which they have to contend, that Scottish red deer have not degenerated still further from the primitive type—that fine type which, as shown by the size of bones and quality of horns exhumed from Scottish peat-mosses and estuaries, was once no whit inferior to the Continental race. Originally and naturally the red deer was a woodland dweller, resorting, no doubt, to the high bare ground in summer to escape the torment of flies and browse upon the fine flush of upland grass; but ever relying upon the forest for shelter, warmth and food in winter. Man stripped the land of trees, expelling the deer from plain and valley and confining them to storm-swept wastes at high altitudes. It is through a grim kind of irony that the term deer-forest has come to connote some of the bleakest, most treeless tracts in Northern Britain. Of the true forest nothing remains but a

* "Deer-breeding for Fine Heads." By Walter Winans. London: Rowland Ward. 1913. 12s. 6d.

few—very few—shreds and patches; the finest of which, that breadth of noble pines along the south shore of Loch Arkaig, is even now disappearing under the axe.

So long as Scottish wild red deer remain in their present environment, exposed in winter to long periods of slashing wet and violent winds—conditions far more trying to these animals than severe dry cold—so long must they remain but stunted representatives of their kind. Moreover, the expulsion of the deer from the low grounds and the destruction of the forest (using that term to denote extensive natural woodland) has deprived them of much of their food supply. Except in so far as hand-feeding mitigates the suffering of the deer in hard weather, they maintain existence by alternate summer glut and winter famine.

"Most of the deer tribe", says Mr. Winans, "are fond of eating leaves; and if a branch falls or is blown down all the deer in the park seem to know of it at once, and come galloping up from all directions to feed on the leaves." Those who have experienced the rigours of a Highland spring will have noted that May is well-nigh spent before there is any appreciable growth in the grass of the deer-ground, and will realise to what hardship the herds are exposed as the result of being driven out of their natural winter quarters.

This circumstance alone would account for the deterioration of our Highland red deer; nor can we share Mr. Winans' hope of regenerating them by crossing the native race with allied species such as the wapiti of North America and the Altai deer, which is the Asiatic form of wapiti. Mr. Winans has achieved and describes satisfactory results by his experiments in this direction with deer in his park at Surrenden in Kent; but the winter conditions in that favoured region are not to be compared with the alternation of arctic cold and pitiless wet that prevails for six months in such forests as Ardverikie, Corrour and Rannoch. In the eastern Highlands, indeed, where the rainfall is not so excessive, the wapiti strain might have a favourable influence for a time; but it could scarcely prove more than temporary, for the wapiti is much less patient of wet than our native red deer; even in sheltered parks it is very liable to consumption and wasting. So much for the natural adversities which have told severely upon the quality of Scottish red deer, and which, we fear, must be written down as irremediable; but, as if these were not injurious enough to the stock, the mischief is intensified by the reckless mismanagement which prevails in most Scottish forests.

On the Continent the greatest care is taken to improve deer; but in Scotland the general rule seems to be to kill every big stag that can be seen, without any reference to the future good of the herd. "How often", says Mr. Winans, "one hears a stalker say: 'Do not shoot that stag; he has a bad head'; or 'We had better go on; there is no head worth shooting in this lot'; whereas he ought to say: 'There is a stag with a very bad head; you had better shoot him'. What would be thought of a breeder of horses and cattle who killed every good animal he bred, and only kept the trash? And yet this is just the way most Scottish forests are managed."

Unluckily it is almost as difficult to remedy this evil as it would be to alter the climatic conditions of the Highlands. Very few owners of deer-forests are able to keep them for their own sport; the great majority of forests are leased to strangers who have no permanent interest in them, and who, not unnaturally, strive to secure as large a proportion as possible of good heads in the number of stags they are allowed to kill, so that they may carry off good trophies as evidence of their prowess. Emulation is a fair element in all field sports—is indeed inseparable from their spirit—but it should never be allowed to degenerate into competition. Yet that motive prevails over sportsmanlike forbearance, both with stalkers and those entrusted to their guidance in the forest, too generally to encourage any expectation of more considerate treatment of wild red deer in the Highlands.

But as regards deer, whether red or fallow, confined

in parks, much may be done to improve the stock by good management and careful selection of breeders. To this end Mr. Winans has applied himself for many years with much success, and the precepts set forth in his book are well worthy of careful study by the owners of herds. Too often deer are kept on the same pasture for generations, even for centuries, without any attempt to improve it; one is painfully familiar with the harsh stale quality of the grass in such neglected parks. Mr. Winans lays much stress upon the necessity of fencing off parts of the park in rotation, to be freshened by rest and top-dressing for a year or more before the deer are readmitted to it. The animals should never be denied the simple luxury of rock salt to lick; and to all deer, especially to red deer, water in the shape of streams or ponds is a primary requisite, and the more mud they can have access to the better, to roll in when flies are troublesome in summer.

Red deer in parks are capable of improvement to an indefinite extent, both in heads and bodies, by judicious management. Mr. Winans has effected much in this direction by crossing the native race with wapiti and Altai deer, the offspring of the crosses being fertile. We sympathise with those who dislike hybrids and prefer to keep the red race pure; but the author speaks very highly of the offspring of crossbred wapiti and red hinds, crossed again with an Altai stag. They are more grey in the coat than the pure red deer, but the stags produce horns that can hardly be distinguished from very fine red-deer horns "such as those one sees in old German or Austrian castles". These triple crosses weigh half as much again as pure red deer; they are fertile and hardy, and Mr. Winans regards them as the source of a very superior type of red deer for park purposes.

Fallow deer run into more varieties than red deer, and one who takes a pride in his herd will probably wish to have it of one type, whether that be the spotted, the bay, the grey or any other variety. To achieve this may take ten or fifteen years, perhaps more. Mr. Winans recommends that elimination of the varieties not desired should be started by killing off the bucks. Thus, if a spotted head is the object in view, dark bucks and those imperfectly spotted should be shot. This may take two or three seasons to accomplish; after which elimination of the does should begin, all dark-coloured fawns meanwhile being killed at once. A herd of fallow deer which has been treated in this discriminating manner is of far more attractive and ornamental appearance than one consisting of deer of all colours, suggestive of domestic cattle. There is, however, no objection to one white buck in a spotted herd, for his influence upon the stock tends to confirm the spottiness; but black or chestnut deer, without spots, should be resolutely eliminated from a spotted herd.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COMPANY'S SIGNALS AND SIGNALS OF DISTRESS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR—There is a question which has an important bearing, not only on the case of the "Californian", to which you have already accorded considerable space, but on safety at sea in general. It may be thus stated:

How may a distress signal be unmistakably distinguished at night from other signals not meant to signify distress?

It will be seen that our regulations do not give a satisfactory answer. They are vague in regard to distress signals, and the latitude allowed in respect of company's private signals seems much greater than their importance warrants. The result is that in many instances there is the possibility of a distress signal being neglected owing to its being interpreted as a

private signal. The latter are so numerous and the differences between them so subtle, that to memorise a fraction of their number would be a formidable task.

The following instances of private signals as used by certain well-known companies are taken from Brown's Nautical Almanac, and their respective numbers in that list are quoted. The first group includes rockets and Roman candles.

110. Three rockets, blue, white and red, in quick succession (shown off Co. Donegal or Cork, Ireland).

4. Blue light and two rockets bursting into golden stars fired in quick succession (shown off Browhead and off Queenstown, Co. Cork). Also same company:

5. Blue light and two Roman candles each throwing six blue balls in quick succession about 150 feet.

36. Red pyro-light, followed quickly by rocket throwing two green stars, then another red pyro-light (shown off South Coast of Ireland by steamers calling at Queenstown).

61. Red pyro-light, accompanied by a Roman candle throwing white stars 50 feet.

105. Yellow pyro-light and Roman candle throwing white balls 150 feet, together.

20. Green flame burning about three minutes, changing to a Roman candle throwing three white balls.

The following are instances of coloured lights or flares burnt alone.

67. Three red pyro-lights burnt singly but in quick succession.

87. Red and yellow pyro-lights in succession.

49. Red light denotes position and, when not in answer to a signal, means "What am I to do?"

50. Red light then a green light means "I am disabled but not in want of assistance."

51. White light to passing vessels at sea means that there are obstructions in or off the port where she has left.

52. Red light, a vessel's answer to a passing sister vessel.

53. Two blue lights burnt by special vessel when fifteen minutes off port of arrival.

56. One red, one blue, one red in succession means "I have injury, but vessel under command".

The Regulations as to distress signals are given as follows:

Article 31. At night.—1. A gun or other explosive signal fired at intervals of about a minute.

2. Flames on the vessel (as from a burning tar-barrel, oil-barrel, etc.).

3. Rockets or shells throwing stars of any colour or description fired one at a time at short intervals.

4. A continuous sounding with any fog-signal apparatus.

From section 3 it follows that if a vessel has only time or opportunity to fire one rocket it would not comply with the regulation, and the observer is at liberty to interpret it as some company's signal with which he might not be familiar and which would therefore not affect him. In a sense it may therefore be said that the greater the urgency, the less chance there is of your signal being understood. Moreover rockets of various colours fired in succession are found amongst private signals as Nos. 110, 4, and 3 above.

Now as to section 2, coloured flares or lights, although not mentioned, are very widely used as distress signals, and it may be presumed are included under "etc." For those who may find—"flames on the vessel as from a burning tar-barrel" or "oil barrel"—inconvenient, there is only the expression "etc." to guide them in selecting flares, or lights, which may not be confounded with company's signals, which include every variety of flare made.

On the other hand, for guidance as to flares which may be used as private signals and will not be mistaken for distress we turn to Article 12, which is as follows:

"Every vessel may, if necessary in order to attract attention, in addition to the lights which she is by these Rules required to carry, show a flare-up light or use any detonating signal that cannot be mistaken for a distress signal."

The inquirer is thus referred back again to the abbreviation "etc." in section 2 above.

In practice many well-equipped ships are provided with the modern rocket distress signals, such as were used by the "Titanic." These seem distinctive in that

they throw a time shell many hundreds of feet in the air which explodes and bursts into stars—principally white. It is claimed that these may be used from ship's boats.

The "mystery ship" X seen by the "Californian" fired several low-lying signals resembling white rockets in that they threw white stars, but they did not explode and did not go as high as the vessel's mast-head light. As she commenced to move away after firing the first signal, the second officer, Mr. Stone, was puzzled, and said in evidence he thought that she might have been signalling to another steamer. Mr. Stone's suggestion was, however, unfavourably received by the Court. According to a recent article in "Scribner's Magazine" by Captain Rostrom of the "Carpathia," he states that he was firing company's rockets from 3.0 A.M. and every quarter of an hour to reassure the "Titanic's" passengers.

The indication of distress by means of rockets seems to depend on the intervals of time allowed between each one which the regulation defines as "short".

Faithfully yours

SEA LAWYER.

"CHIVALRY" IN POLITICS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR—In your editorial note to the letter of Mr. Marr Grieve on the case of Sir Edward Carson and Mr. F. E. Smith you say that "the popular difficulty in understanding the status of an advocate is to us unintelligible". May I be forgiven for saying that the man in the street is, in this matter, not such a fool as you think him; and that it is you who do not seem to understand the difficulty? If Sir Edward Carson and Mr. F. E. Smith were mere advocates, or even pure political lawyers, that is, lawyers passing through Parliament to the Bench, there would have been no discussion and no resentment. But it is generally understood that Sir Edward Carson and Mr. F. E. Smith aspire to be something more than lawyers; that they wish to be counted amongst the political leaders of the Unionist party. To take present instances might be offensive, so I will take past examples. If Sir John Rigby, or Sir Horace Davey, or Sir Richard Webster, or Sir Edward Clarke, had done what Sir Edward Carson and Mr. F. E. Smith have done, I do not think there would have been any talk, because the eminent lawyers I have mentioned never aspired to be anything but lawyers: they were proud of their profession, and content to remain within its bounds. But when a lawyer in Parliament claims to be a statesman his conduct must be judged by a different canon. A statesman must engage in no business in which his private interest conflicts with his public duty—that canon at least has emerged from the Marconi debate. The private interest of Messrs. Carson and Smith was to take the highly-marked briefs of the solicitors to Messrs. Isaacs and George. Their public duty (as statesmen) was to condemn the conduct of these Ministers in the House of Commons. They could not do both; so they followed their private interest, and must therefore be charged with a dereliction of public duty. The two most powerful speakers on the Front Opposition Bench disabled themselves from taking part in the Marconi debate. Are not Unionists entitled to complain? Or rather, are they not justified in saying "These men shall be no party leaders of mine"? If they prefer the etiquette of the Bar or the fees of the Bar to the opportunity of the statesman, to the Bar let them stick. This is the way the layman, whether one of the populace or one of the educated, will argue, and he will be right. Messrs. Carson and Smith cannot have it both ways. As for the etiquette of the Bar, a counsel may be obliged to accept a retainer; but he cannot be obliged to accept the brief, for he may insist on a prohibitive fee and then return the retainer.

Yours etc.

COMMENTATOR.

THE MARCONI VERDICT.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

21 June 1913.

SIR—The Marconi debate is over and the politicians may be left to digest the result as best they may. But—a matter of real importance—what will be the general verdict of the public? I think it may be expressed in the words of a rebuke which I once heard effectively administered: "Anybody may be a fool, but nobody has a right to be a damned fool!"

I am Sir your obedient servant
T.

THE BENCH AND THE NEW LAND TAXES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Springhill Clarkston Glasgow, 21 June 1913.

SIR—For such persons as have studied the cases which have come into Court in connexion with the new land taxes, it will be a debatable question whether the inception and construction of these enactments have not done more than the Marconi Mystery itself to reveal the personality which is covered by the skin of our leading social reformer. Whilst the People's Budget has undoubtedly been productive of public benefit in this way, there is another function, not so desirable, which it has exercised and is exercising with equal efficiency. It is the stultification of His Majesty's Courts of justice. I saw in a former letter how every judge before whom increment duty cases have been tried has ignored not merely the intention of the Act as avowed in express terms by its authors with the full assent of Parliament. That is the pride and privilege of the British lawyer where any eccentricity of wording can be found to afford a pretext for so doing. But their ingenuity has misled them in these pronouncements. The grammar and the mathematics of the clauses have been, equally with their intention, set at defiance.

In the kindred question of negative land values we have seen three judges of the Court of Session finding unanimously that such values are repugnant to the letter and the spirit of the Act; and thereafter four judges of the House of Lords finding with the same unanimity that the repugnancy is all the other way. The impartial layman will find some justification for the first decision in the innate and obvious absurdity of an assessable site value which is less than nothing, and for the latter in the fact that, however absurd, these values are in the Georgian law.

It was when their Lordships of the supreme tribunal dealt with the subsidiary question of the 10 per cent. allowance that the malignant influence of the People's Budget on the judicial intelligence became apparent. By Clause 3 (5) that percentage of the original value is to be deducted from increment before the duty is assessed. Now the original value in a very large number of cases in Scotland is less than nothing. In these cases the statutory deduction obviously becomes an addition. The thing is of course a choice specimen of what a dumb and docile parliamentary majority can do under asinine leadership. With the exception of Lord Atkinson, who like a sensible man "gave it up", their Lordships must rack their wits to find sense and wisdom in the provision. Lord Haldane was of opinion that "the sub-section in question becomes harmonious and intelligible if original site value is read in this particular case as meaning"—not what it is explicitly declared to mean, but what, expressed in Lord Haldane's dignified periods, comes to exactly the same thing. I will not waste your space by quoting him.

It is Lord Shaw's deliverance that I wish to bring to public notice, and for this purpose it is unfortunately necessary to quote at some length. He said:

"One element derived from the Statute was introduced to show that the calculations made in accordance with the rule set up in Sec. 25 were impossible. The reference was to Sec. 3 (5), which provides that 'for the purpose of the collection of duty on the increment value

of any land under this section the increment value shall be deemed to be reduced on the first occasion . . . by an amount equal to 10 per cent. of the original site value'. . . . The argument was that with a minus value assessable site value could never thus be credited with its 10 per cent. of allowance. My Lords, the argument is illegitimate, because by Sec. 25 that very sub-section (namely 5 of Sec. 3), which is for the purpose of the collection of duty on the increment value, is excluded from the definition of site value. By Sec. 25 it is provided that 'any reference in this Act to site value (other than the reference to the site value of land on an occasion on which increment value duty is to be collected) shall be deemed to be a reference to the assessable site value of the land'. The parenthetical reference is precisely to the occasion on which increment duty is to be collected, and that is the occasion set forth in Sec. 3 (5), which is specifically 'for the purpose of the collection of duty'."

Lord Shaw, it will be seen, claims to bring Clause 3 (5) within the ambit of the parenthesis in the last paragraph of Clause 25 (4) on the ground that it (Clause 3 (5)) has reference to (or, as he says, "is for the purpose of") the collection of increment value duty on an occasion. That, with all respect to Lord Shaw, is not the effect of the parenthesis at all. What is excluded by the parenthesis—in Lord Shaw's slipshod diction "the parenthetical reference"—is the reference to site values of land "on an occasion"; and the reference in Clause 3 (5) is to "original site value of the land", expressly defined by the paragraph Lord Shaw quotes to be the original assessable site value of the land. A good many of the judges have broken their teeth over this same paragraph of Clause 25 (4); and I cannot help wondering what was Lord Shaw's motive for leaving out the last seven words of the paragraph. They are the crucial words—"as ascertained in accordance with this section". The references excluded by the parenthesis are to be deemed to be references to the assessable site value of the land as ascertained in accordance with Sec. 2; in other words (when the occasion is a transfer on sale), as ascertained by taking the consideration as basis.

I am Sir your obedient servant

JOHN GOVAN.

"UNPATH'D WATERS."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR—Your review of my book, "Unpath'd Waters", recalls the past of English criticism most vividly. The crusted tradition of anonymous insult is revived in every line of it. One remembers how the "Edinburgh Review" talked about Wordsworth's "maudlin imbecility" and declared that the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" was the "most illegible and unintelligible part of the publication". The SATURDAY REVIEW of forty or fifty years ago did its best to keep up the tradition, and sometimes when old Scott of Hoxton was out on the warpath, tomahawk in fist, murdering some poor beginner, the imitation was very close. This review of my book is of the same sort. In your reviewer's opinion, my first and worst book is my best, but he can't spell the title of it; he takes Maeterlinck for a "Dutchman": he declares that in "The Miracle of the Stigmata" and "The Holy Man" I am exploiting Maeterlinck's vein, though I worked it ten years before that genial Belgian; he chastises me for having put a lord who may become a Cabinet Minister in Lincoln College; I did nothing of the sort: four blunders in twenty lines of spiteful insult.

That is supposed to be the careful review in a literary paper of a book which I have kept in hand more than the nine years Horace advised.

Yours faithfully

FRANK HARRIS.

REVIEWS.

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

"The Works of Francis Thompson." Three Vols.
London: Burns and Oates. 1913. 18s. net.

FRANCIS THOMPSON, writing of Shelley, has celebrated himself. Comparing Shelley with poets of the metaphysical school—with Donne and with Crashaw—he innocently rebukes those who find in the work of Francis Thompson to-day only the echoes of dead men. The passage is worthy to be cited either, as Thompson intended it, in explanation of Shelley, or, as it so excellently serves, in defence of Thompson. For Thompson needs to be defended. He is admired intensely; but he is very far from universally admired. Lovers of his poetry have bravely to confess that many readers, not vulgarly insensitive, are unable to detect in his verse the authentic ring—that they are reminded of Wordsworth, of Blake, of Crashaw; that they are precipitated headlong to and fro the generations of English speech in a race to be level with his vocabulary; that Thompson, in a word, falling short of being a poet of humanity, is at his best, for them, a poet's poet, and at his worst a poet of schoolmen and prosodists.

Thompson's comparison of Shelley with Crashaw follows his magnificently rhetorical celebration of Shelley—"The universe is his box of toys". Therein is described Shelley's revelry with images and figures for their own sake. "How beautiful a thing", Thompson continues, "the frank toying with imagery may be, let 'The Skylark' and 'The Cloud' witness. It is only evil when the poet, on the straight way to a fixed object, lags continually from the path to play. . . . The metaphysical school failed, not because it toyed with imagery, but because it toyed with it frostily. . . . You may toy with imagery in mere intellectual ingenuity, and then you might as well go write acrostics: or you may toy with it in raptures, and then you may write a 'Sensitive Plant'. . . . Shelley was saved by his passionate spontaneity; no trappings are too splendid for the swift steeds of sunrise. His sword-hilt may be rough with jewels, but it is the hilt of an Excalibur. His thoughts scorch through all the folds of expression. His cloth of gold bursts at the flexures, and shows the naked poetry". Might not this passage, without suppression of a word, be written of a hundred lines of Francis Thompson? Take even the most elaborate of his "conceits":

"Or the butterfly sunset claps its wings
With flitter alit on the swinging blossom,
The gusty blossom, that tosses and swings,
Of the sea with its blown and ruffled bosom;
Its ruffled bosom wherethrough the wind sings
Till the crisped petals are loosened and strown
Overblown, on the sand;
Shed, curling as dead
Rose-leaves curl, on the flecked strand."

If this be an acrostic, if this be toying frostily as Donne would toy, let us cultivate "intellectual ingenuity", and repeat the achievement. We would challenge all critics of Thompson with such "conceits". His cloth of gold bursts at the flexures and shows the naked poetry. Turn the page of this "Corymbus for Autumn", whence our butterfly sunset is taken (pinned here for inspection apart from the setting that adds to its glory):

"And I had ended there:
But a great wind blew all the stars to flare,
And cried, 'I sweep the path before the moon!
Tarry ye now the coming of the moon,
For she is coming soon';
Then died before the coming of the moon."

Is this yet another "conceit", or frosty miscarriage of a simile? If any distinguished critic thinks it so, let him re-write it in parody. Then some inkling of

the truth may come which Thompson himself discovers in "Sister Songs":

"The Poet is not lord
Of the next syllable may come
With the returning pendulum;
And what he plans to-day in song,
To-morrow sings it in another tongue.
Where the last leaf fell from his bough,
He knows not if a leaf shall grow;
Where he sows he doth not reap,
He reapeth where he did not sow;
He sleeps, and dreams forsake his sleep
To meet him on his waking way,
Vision will mate him not by law and vow:
Disguised in life's most hodden-grey,
By the most beaten road of every day
She waits him, unsuspected and unknown,
The hardest pang whereon
He lays his mutinous head may be a
Jacob's stone."

Thompson not only objects to a poet toying with images "in mere intellectual ingenuity". He also objects to a poet who "lags continually from the path to play". Really the two objections are one. Images that are cloth of gold bursting at the flexures come to the poet in the heat of expression. They are his native language. He does not seek them out. He does not collect pretty figures for their own sake. He does not go out of his way for them. They are not embellishment. They are the simple notes of his song. A poet who sings spontaneously does not linger in coloratura passages that lose the melody. The real answer to critics who object that Thompson loses himself in "conceits" is that Thompson is spontaneously a singer. Undoubtedly we hear in his song echoes of Wordsworth and of Crashaw. So do we hear in Shakespeare the mighty line of Marlowe; in Beethoven the progressions of Haydn and of Mozart. Francis Thompson sings in his proper voice. Inspiration makes of his instrument the "swift messenger of thought". Thompson's instrument was the English tongue, new-stored with knowledge of its riches in every period of English poetry. Thompson was cultivated and widely read in English poetry; and his temperament, which loved authority and naturally inducted the great traditions of the past, did not suffer him easily to forget. He aspired to be the heir of dead poets quite as definitely as he aspired to be the predecessor of poets unborn. Thence come these charges of imitation and of affected archaism which his friends have now to meet. Thence comes the charge that he plays frostily with poet's fire; that he lags by the way. The charge, for those whom Thompson's poetry leaves cold, is best met with a challenge. Strike out from "The Hound of Heaven" any line which delays the

" . . . unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy",

of its uninterrupted march. Attempt to do so, and you will in the end be compelled to strike out the whole poem or to leave it intact—a test we are quite ready that Francis Thompson should survive.

The day of Francis Thompson is not yet. Charges of obscurity and artifice have still to fall away from his name, as they have fallen away from Robert Browning. Moreover, we have to recover the "Old Christianity" or the "New Paganism" of which Thompson is equally the singing prophet, before his message is widely heard and read. "Jacob's ladder, Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross . . . Christ walking on the water Not of Gennesareth, but Thames" is his final vision. Few see the setting sun to-day as Thompson sees it:

"Thou art of Him a type memorial,
Like Him thou hang'st in dreadful pomp of blood
Upon thy Western rood . . ."

Thompson, as a great religious poet, was born out of his generation. Certainly he does not belong to

his own age of intellectual curiosity and analysis. Nor does he in any way hark back over the centuries. Rather he seems to have achieved for himself precisely that synthesis of flesh and spirit after which the philosophers are fumbling to-day—that seems everywhere at point of breaking out in art and life and letters:

“Ah! let the sweet birds of the Lord
With earth's waters make accord;
Teach how the crucifix may be
Carven from the laurel tree,
Fruit of the Hesperides
Burnish take on Eden-trees,
The Muse's sacred grove be wet
With the dew of Olivet,
And Sappho lay her burning brows
In white Cecilia's lap of snows!”

* Fittingly, the first poem of these volumes (ending in a vision of Christ upon the waters of Thames) is the incomparable “Daisy”—of all his exquisite songs to childhood the one which most surely proclaims to the future Thompson's simplicity:

“She knew not those sweer words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way;
But there's never a bird so sweet a song
Thronged in whose throat that day.

“Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day!

“For standing artless as the air,
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
And the love with her sweet eyes.”

Is the distance so far as it seems between Thompson's “Daisy” and his Jacob's ladder at Charing Cross? Here, in these volumes, it is to be measured; and posterity will measure it, when much that more accurately chimes with to-day is forgotten:

“Love! I fall into the claws of Time:
But lasts within a leavèd rhyme
All that the world of me esteems—
My withered dreams, my withered dreams.”

A WHIG ON BRIGHT.

“The Life of John Bright.” By G. M. Trevelyan.
London: Constable. 1913. 15s. net.

TO a biographer reputation is a danger. Though it would be too much to say of this book that, as Mr. Trevelyan himself says of Disraeli's “Bentinck”, nine-tenths of the interest lies in the author, the reader is bound to ask himself what Mr. Trevelyan makes of Bright. It is a fascinating question, because Mr. Trevelyan is an anachronism. In his Garibaldi trilogy he reveals himself as a Whig of the 'sixties. We can thus expect from him, as we could expect from no other writer living except perhaps his father, an estimate of Bright from the point of view of the more enlightened gentlemen among whom Bright found himself when he entered Parliament. We get that estimate. We get it in the first half of the book where Mr. Trevelyan contrasts him with Peel to the advantage of Peel, and in the last half where he contrasts him with Gladstone to the advantage of Gladstone. We get it above all in the brilliant introduction where Bright is described as an agitator. That is just the word that would occur to the old Whig who thought a public meeting improper. But is it the right word for a biographer to use? Would Mr. Trevelyan himself feel sympathetic towards a biographer of Garibaldi who began by describing him as a condottiere?

It is this point of view that makes a good book bad biography. The business of a biographer is to describe

events from his subject's standpoint, and that is what Mr. Trevelyan has not done, and, to do him justice, has not tried to do. The result is a vacillation that confuses and sometimes annoys the reader. For example, in March 1842 Cobden and Bright were dissatisfied with the progress of the Anti-Corn Law League. Accordingly Cobden writes to Bright proposing that the Free Traders should refuse to pay taxes, and Bright replies next day with a plan that the cotton-spinners should threaten to close down a body. Mr. Trevelyan prints both these remarkable letters, and comments thus: “Proposals to coerce the Legislature by refusing taxes or by instituting a national strike, have a strange sound in the mouths of sober men like Cobden and Bright. If Peel's Budget of 1842 had not actually been doing much more for Free Trade than was yet realised, it is not improbable that resistance of some kind would soon have been resorted to by the manufacturing community”. That would be a perfectly proper comment for a biographer of Peel. But it is very embarrassing in a biographer of Bright. Presumably nobody could read a letter from a Quaker advocating a national strike without feeling it very strange. Mr. Trevelyan goes out of his way to emphasise its strangeness, but, instead of explaining it, eulogises Peel. He may be right, but it was not his business. His business was to explain the workings of Bright's mind; and because he fails to do so he has not written good biography.

This failure to get inside Bright's mind is the defect of the book. All the way through Mr. Trevelyan gives us half the truth. It is the half which the average modern man could not supply for himself, and we are grateful for it. But it is only half all the same. We get a glimpse of Bright as the connecting-link between, say, Lord John Russell and Mr. Lloyd George. But all we learn is how he was able to work with Lord John. On the equally important subject of his relations with the young Chamberlain, Mr. Trevelyan has nothing to say. On the other hand, he shows us, as nobody else could show us, how Bright led the Whigs to democracy. By the time he entered Parliament the gentlemen were prepared to come to terms with the manufacturers. But that state of mind might have led, and very nearly did, to an alliance of the haves in town and country against the Chartist have-nots. Bright stood for a counter-alliance between the middle classes and the best artisans. That is why the latter part of his active career was devoted to Reform, and in 1867 he had won his battle. Again, in foreign policy Bright was as cosmopolitan as the gentlemen. He too could believe in a United Italy, although he knew nothing of the ancients and cared nothing for them either, though Mr. Trevelyan in the face of his own evidence tries to make out that he did. But no amount of Russellite cosmopolitanism would have produced sympathy with the men who dominated the United States during the 'sixties. Bright gave the new twist to the old point of view. When he made a Palmerstonian Cabinet begin to do justice to Lincoln he introduced a new set of ideas into foreign policy. In both cases Mr. Trevelyan is at pains to work out the way in which Bright managed to get into touch with the aristocrats. That done, he drops the matter. But Bright did not drop it.

There is one matter in which Mr. Trevelyan tells something less than his usual half of the truth. We looked forward with much interest to an estimate of Bright's oratory by the possessor of so rich and fastidious a style. Somehow we just fail to get what we wanted. Mr. Trevelyan's opening is fatal. “Lord Salisbury's opinion”, he says, “which would place Bright as an orator above Gladstone, is not universally accepted”. Is it not? It was not perhaps in 1860, but now we can more clearly distinguish between oratory and rhetoric. Bright was all orator. Gladstone had at his command the devices of the schools, all those magnificent tricks of the trade which made his speeches such a marvel to hear. Mr. Trevelyan misses this vital point. “Of the two”, he says, “it is Bright whose speeches can be read with greatest pleasure, though that perhaps is no test of oratory.” On the

contrary it is *the* test of oratory. The bane of the orator is his technique. If he knows how to put a thing—and this is a knowledge that can be taught—he can always capture an audience. But he cannot hold posterity, for rhetoric is a device of the moment drawing its power from its surroundings. But Mr. Trevelyan does not quite understand what oratory is. He sees that its secret lies in an arrangement of words, but because he knows how to write he judges it by the test of good prose style. Really, however, oratory is like poetry. It appeals straight to the ear. No matter if you are only reading Bright, directly you are carried away you feel the sound, just as in the immortal phrases of Wordsworth or Keats. Written prose, on the contrary, makes a more subtle appeal. Its arrangement of words calls up an atmosphere which moves the mind. Rhetoric, the subordinate part of oratory, is the art of calling up the atmosphere of the moment. It stands to oratory as verse-writing to poetry. In Bright's greatest speeches there is next to no rhetoric; in Gladstone's greatest speeches there are passages of oratory.

We have tried to show that it was not in Mr. Trevelyan's power to write a true biography of Bright. Of this he was conscious himself, and because of it he has committed a serious blunder. The failing of the biographer is the virtue of the historian, and where Mr. Trevelyan has least understood his subject he has made historical comments. If these comments are intended to suggest the final place of Bright in history they fall far short of the mark. We are certainly not prepared to admit that the authoritative historian will see eye to eye with the Russellite Whig. It follows that Mr. Trevelyan's history is often provocative. As an example of the wrong way of doing things take his treatment of the Transvaal difficulty of 1881. "Bright paid no attention to the question", he says, "and failed to warn his colleagues of their negligence until it was too late." That surely is all that is required, but at this point Mr. Trevelyan the historian appears and writes: "The failure of an English Government to fulfil its pledges, and of a Liberal Government to act on Liberal principles, brought on the first Boer war, the parent of the second. The very different conduct pursued in our own time, after another Liberal victory at the polls, has done all that might so easily have been done in 1880 by the Ministry of the day." Of these sentences the first is superfluous and the second impertinent. We would remind Mr. Trevelyan that if a biographer proposes to intrude at all on the historian's ground it is his business to aim at impartiality. Mr. Trevelyan writes history in the spirit of an embittered pamphleteer. It is within his right to hold up Disraeli to obloquy and ridicule, but not in the pages of a biography of Bright. Bright and Disraeli were friends for many years, and if Bright was not ashamed of the friendship Mr. Trevelyan need not blush. It is unworthy of a writer of his eminence to revel in Bright's debating taunts of Disraeli for having changed his opinions on the Irish Church in the course of twenty-five years. Have Liberals always been consistent? And there is something indecent in the gusto with which he tells the story of Disraeli saying to Bright "I would give all that I have ever had to have made the speech you made just now"; and Bright's reply, "Well, you might have made it if you had been honest".

"RELIGION'S ELDEST SON."

"Sir Henry Vane the Younger." By John Willcock.
London: The S. Catherine Press. 1913. 10s. net.

THE records of the early Puritans", remarks Dean Henson—to whom, however, Laudianism and Tractarianism mean a return to beggarly elements—"are the most repulsive literature I know. It is the fashion now to censure the spiritual deadness of the eighteenth century, but the true authors of that evil and scandalous chapter in Christian history were the fanatics of the previous age." True, but what

a picturesqueness and stately *byos* there was in some of them! The younger Vane, unlike his foxy and time-serving father, was a pure fanatic. In his youth, as Governor of Massachusetts, he came out as a Hutchinsonian theocrat, to whom the Puritan ministers who adhered to carnalities like the Decalogue or the Sacraments were priests of Baal, and who denied the vote to anyone not in the covenant of grace. Ah, cried York Powell once, if, instead of the Pilgrim Fathers landing on Plymouth Rock, it had only landed upon them! Vane was always a millenarian mystic, although declining to find the reign of the saints realised in the 144 of the Little Parliament, which moreover proposed to substitute the Mosaic code for the laws of England. When Cromwell was wiping his boots on those laws, levying taxes at his own will and padlocking the doors of Parliament, Vane was still found talking to the clouds about the people being the original of all just power. Cromwell, the practical opportunist, shut him up in Carisbrooke—"the Lord deliver me from Sir Henry Vane"—to put an end to his prating. He held him a juggler, and Vane in turn considered with Ludlow that the Cromwellian despotism was treacherous and impious. Vane's visionary character has been called un-English—indeed his mother was a Guicciardini of Florence. Yet he made a great parliamentary leader—"he was that within the House which Cromwell was without", says Baxter, who thought all Vane's influence was for evil. The Cardinal de Retz held him a man d'une capacité surprenante, and Clarendon remarks that there was "something in him, all his life long, of extraordinary". Sikes, his biographer, says that his enemies believed all the revolutions of that age to have been wrought by his influence, "as if the world were only moved by his engine", and the Restoration Parliament was unanimous for excepting him from pardon. He had long been the most hated man in England, lying, says a correspondent of Governor Winthrop, "under the most catholic prejudice of anie man that I know". The Royalists naturally hated him, the Presbyterians regarded him as an antinomian, the Levellers as an aristocrat, Lilburne had hoped to slit the throat of this "covetous earthworm", and the London anti-Army mob threatened in 1647 to cut him in pieces in Palace Yard. Dr. Willcock, however, styles Vane the purest patriot England has ever seen. He eulogises his disinterestedness, yet this mystic feathered his nest in the same way that Harrison, Bradshaw and the Cromwell family made gain of godliness. Even while hatching treason against his sovereign he was holding, by Charles I.'s grace, lucrative Crown offices, and the Long Parliament voted him a fat pension—Milton speaks bitterly of the "offices, gifts and preferments which they bestowed and shared among themselves".

Dr. Willcock, who writes from a northern manse, is a frankly partisan historian. For example, he suppresses in his account of Cromwell's doings in Ireland all mention of the hideous massacres perpetrated by him, and denies that Laud died for the Church of England on the plea that he was accused of being an innovator! The present work seldom lifts itself out of the regular Whig ruts. We are glad therefore to find an admission that it was the King who, by means of the ship-money, placed the defence of our coasts in an adequate state of efficiency, so that Vane, as Treasurer of the Navy, was able to hand over to the King's enemies, when the Rebellion broke out, the main instrument of his undoing. Under the Protectorate Blake denounced the condition into which the fleets had been allowed to fall. Dr. Willcock is also refreshingly candid in endorsing Willis-Bund's apology for the repressive legislation of the restored monarchy—that a Government in those days had no standing force of military or executive police to put down sedition when it had gone beyond a certain point. If stringent laws against nonconformity and the licence of the press had not been promptly enforced, armed rebellion would certainly have had to be coped with. However, the interest of a life of Vane is the man

himself. Was he a prophet of tolerance for all beliefs born out of due time? Certainly, that was involved in his formless creed, and he said much about liberty. But then that was when Presbyterian tyranny was in the ascendant. What measure was Vane willing to mete to papists or prelatists? Vane was born exactly 300 years ago, and in the intervening three centuries Liberalism has never done anything but persecute historic Christianity.

ITALY FOR TOURIST AND STUDENT.

"Little Cities of Italy." By André Maurel. London and New York: Putnam. 1913. 9s. net.

"Ravenna: a Study." By Edward Hutton. London: Dent. 1913. 10s. 6d. net.

ANYONE reading the two above-mentioned books, one after the other, especially if he happens to have recently visited Ravenna and is full of his own impressions thereof, will experience a thorough mental "see-saw". Where M. Maurel attributes to Papal mismanagement the misconduct of Ravennese matters in the past, Mr. Hutton finds Arian or barbarian misrule, and so on throughout. Oddly enough, both authors lead off with the same apostrophe of Ravenna the Immortal; she is with both of them "a marvellous reliquary", "an Imperial city which has become a reliquary". There, however, all similarity of description ends, and the "see-saw" begins. M. Maurel necessarily gives only a sketch of the place, one among many others he visits. Mr. Hutton gives us a very thorough serious "study" of the city, with its past Imperial, mediæval, and Renaissance periods. Personally we deem all translations vain, and we sigh for the original of M. Maurel's "Little Cities of Italy"; and when we read of Pope Hadrian I. and the Italian dukes that "they keep up such a row", or of "imponderable grace", and similar expressions—we have our doubts as to the author's vivacious French having been perfectly "done into English", and feel that the bloom has been wiped off the peach. Besides, the fantastic French titles to the chapters lose their lightness entirely when translated into elephantine American-English.

Mr. Hutton's book abounds as usual in mannerisms, and his faith in his reader's memory is so small that he repeats wholesale from his book "Cities of Lombardy", twice gives us within twelve pages the same lengthy quotation from Strabo, and by the time we get to page 31 has reiterated four times the fact that "Cisalpine Gaul in its relations to Italy was best held and contained by Ravenna, which commanded" etc. Three and four times too on the same page recur the wearying phrases "it may seem", "it could", or "would", or "might seem", and "as I have said", "as I say". Apart from the mannerisms Mr. Hutton "would seem" to have brought together pretty well all that is known of Ravenna—and that is much. His final page of Chapter X. regarding the cessation of her historical importance coincident with Emperor Charlemagne's appearance—his description of the sad dusty country on the way to S. Apollinare in Classe—are really fine specimens of prose; and what he writes of that fearful crisis in the world's history when "Italy, without defence, lay at the mercy of the Asiatic invader", and Attila and his Huns were at the open undefended gates of Ravenna, deserves quoting: "Without defence! Valentinian and his court were in Rome; no one armed and ready waited in impregnable Ravenna to break the Hun as with a hammer when he should venture to take the road through the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea. . . . In this moment, one of the greatest crises in the history of Europe, suddenly and without warning, the reality of that age which had changed so imperceptibly, was revealed. The material civilisation and defence of the Empire were, at least as organised things, seen to be dead; its spiritual virility and splendour were about to be manifested. For it was not any Emperor or great

soldier at the head of an army that faced Attila by the Mincio on the Cisalpine plain and saved Italy, but an old and unarmed man, alone and defenceless. Our saviour was Pope Leo the Great; but above him, in the sky, the Hun perceived the mighty figures overshadowing all that world, of S. Peter and S. Paul, and his eyes dazzled he bowed his head. 'What', he asked himself, 'if I conquer like Alaric only to die as he did?' He yielded and consented to retreat: Italy was saved. The new Emperor, the true head and champion of the new civilisation that was to arise out of all this confusion, had declared himself. It was the Pope".

The part of the book dealing solely with the Ravenna of Dante's time is based largely and necessarily on Boccaccio's "Vita di Dante", and every word is interesting. Here we have no quarrel with the translator. The death of Dante and his funeral obsequies in the church of the Franciscan Friars Minor (Dante himself belonged to the Third Order of S. Francis) reads as movingly as in the original Italian. Though writing diffusely about the famous mosaics in the churches, Mr. Hutton does not enlighten us as to those mysterious letters initialled here and there on the figures, and what they stand for. Are they the initials of the original workers' names? Also, although he objects to it, he should have stated that the use of painting in restoring the mosaics has been in several cases deliberately adopted in order to avoid future confusion between the old and the new—a confusion already making itself felt, it is said, in the restorations in S. Apollinare in Classe.

From M. Maurel's book we should like to quote many things, amongst them his keen observations as to Italian lack of appreciation of open spaces in their towns. Florence at this very minute is blocking up her one possible "central public gardens" with a top-heavy post office. M. Maurel's is essentially a book for use while travelling, and abounds in personal impressions most amusingly expressed; whilst Mr. Hutton's work is a very serious "study" not to be taken in bits in hotels and trains, but quietly after or before the traveller has travelled into those bewitching regions of which these authors write. Both books are well illustrated, Mr. Hutton being more fortunate than with most of his previous books. The photographs in M. Maurel's are extraordinarily good.

"THE INSIDE OF THE CUP."

"The Inside of the Cup." By Winston Churchill. London: Macmillan. 1913. 6s.

THE new book by Mr. Winston Churchill—the American not our Mr. Churchill—is neither strictly a novel nor intrinsically American. But it is a story of high purpose, the scene of which is laid in America; the author makes a sincere attempt upon a standard problem of civilisation, and so provides a further illustration of the tendency towards "high seriousness" in contemporary American fiction. To this we have, in the past year or two, called attention more than once—particularly in reviewing Mr. Kauffman's "Daughters of Ishmael"—but it would be hypocritical merely to pat America on the back for this awakening and broadening of her social conscience, while we of the older civilisation must confess and deplore that "de nobis etiam fabula narratur". Neither Mr. Churchill nor Mr. Kauffman preaches to us on a new text; both sermons require to be repeated constantly; but people in England may perhaps claim that their self-analysis has had a few years' start, and these arraignment of modern social and commercial evil reach them across the Atlantic with a sound only too familiar.

Certainly Mr. Churchill's text is not new: it is simply "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon". In his fable, a young priest, the Rev. John Hodder, is summoned from a quiet parish in the backwoods to minister to a rich congregation in a fully-developed town; and before he has been long amongst them his eyes are opened and he begins to shed his innocence. His naïve

discoveries are vieux jeu to anyone familiar with the elements of social economics—which is exactly what he is not; to him it is an appalling blow when it is revealed that the leaders of his wealthy vestry are men who attempt to insure themselves against eternal fire by paying premiums to the Church, in exactly the same way as they “insure” their houses against to-morrow’s fire by cautionary deposits of cash. With George Eliot’s definition of religion as a narcotic in our ears, and sermons such as “Widowers’ Houses” and Mr. George Calderon’s “The Fountain”—to name but two of the first that occur to us—fresh in our minds, the spectacle of a trained man of God discovering such paradoxes for himself is pathetic; nevertheless painfully true. Meanwhile, Hodder’s private faith suffers a revulsion, and he proclaims from his own pulpit a disavowal of the first principles of Christian belief. In the event, he is restored by the discovery that religion cannot be static and must be dynamic—or, in the simpler and therefore truer words, that faith without good works is of no avail; and thus he is born again of the Spirit.

Such a psychological analysis and spiritual reconstruction as this is obviously too personal a matter for criticism; one need only say that the author is entirely sincere. The skill with which he has interwoven the humanities with his moral endeavour deserves the reader’s thanks. We have said the book is not a novel: it is better—it is a tract. The author’s natural gifts for characterisation, however, colour the puppets who carry out his purpose to more than a semblance of life; and although the regeneration of a woman of the streets is no new thing to fiction, and while we know that people do not in real life make eloquent set speeches explaining their morality or defending their immorality, we are satisfied with the sight of the author’s intention gradually achieving a definite shape.

BIOLOGICAL ESSAYS.

“Problems of Life and Reproduction.” By Professor Marcus Hartog. London: Murray. 1913. 7s. 6d. net.

MOST of the chapters in this volume have already appeared as essays in some of the leading Reviews, at dates ranging from 1892 to 1910, and they treat of highly technical subjects with simplicity and directness. Professor Hartog has two advantages over most of the specialist writers. He himself is an expert on the lower plants as well as on the lower animals, and so is able to present a broadly biological view. He is critical rather than constructive, anxious to see both sides of a question, with a slight bias against contemporary professional orthodoxy. And so he ranges from the reproduction of the green algae to the problems of heredity, from the inheritance of acquired characters to the mode of educating young children, always well informed, direct, and interesting.

The most valuable part of his book relates to fertilisation and the problems of nuclear change, and owes much of its special merit to his large acquaintance with these processes in both plants and animals. Most writers have been disposed to apply the words sexual reproduction and sexual fertilisation to all the cases in which elements from two sources unite to form the beginning of the new generation. Professor Hartog insists that the differentiation of sex is a secondary phenomenon, often absent from cases where two cells fuse to form a “fertilised cell”, and, further, points out that reproduction itself is not a necessary or inevitable result of the fusion of cells. Sex, reproduction, and conjugation, the fusion of two cells, are separate and independent occurrences, coincident in the more familiar cases of the higher animals and plants, but not in themselves in any causal nexus. The disentangling of these factors leads him to a very simple explanation of such experiments as the apparently marvellous “fertilisation” of ova by chemical bodies, and to a very simple interpretation of the complicated puzzle of the extrusion of polar bodies.

An interesting but inconclusive section of Professor Hartog’s essays deals with the old-standing antinomy between vitalistic and mechanistic conceptions. Quite rightly the professor states that some twenty or thirty years ago the triumphs of chemistry and physics seemed to be giving an easy victory to the anti-vitalists. Up to about that time it was held that there was an essential difference between the chemistry and physics of a living organism and the chemistry

and physics of inorganic substances. Organic bodies were regarded as peculiar products of a special activity beyond the power of imitation in the laboratory. When the chemist began to build up substances that hitherto had been known only as the products of living protoplasm, the distinction was broken down once for all. A rather fantastic effort was made to defend the vitalistic conception by urging that as the synthetic chemist was a living being, the organic substances which he built up in his laboratory were in a sense the products of living beings. Professor Hartog is almost equally fantastic when he suggests that as manufacture for a special purpose by a living being is part of the conception of a machine, the most extreme mechanistic conception of the living world necessarily involves the teleology of Paley.

We do not think that the professor understands fully or states clearly the present position of the problem. The barrier between the organic and inorganic has been broken down, but the antinomy between mechanism and vitalism remains. The mechanist still supposes that there is no reason to believe in any peculiar force which may be called vital, but that, did we know more, we should be able to resolve all the complex manifestations and properties of living organism into known chemical and physical forces. The vitalist does not believe this, but recognising that the barrier has been broken down, he claims boldly that vital force not only is a real existence but extends into the inorganic sphere, and that inorganic chemistry and physics are in a sense degenerate derivatives of vital chemistry and physics. Life, or vital force, is the beginning of all.

In his theory of heredity, Professor Hartog plumps for the inheritance of acquired characters, chiefly on theoretical grounds—one might almost say pragmatistical grounds. He has few additional instances to allege, and these are doubtful of interpretation. He makes light of the difficulty that there is no known means by which the effects of environment making what is called an acquired character can be impressed on the germ, the germ having none of the parts or tissues which the environment affects in the soma, and impressed in such a fashion that in due course, when the germ develops its own parts and tissues, the character should appear without the influence of the environment. The supposition appears to him to be so convenient that he is prepared to throw the onus of disproving it on those who are not prepared to accept it. At the same time, he has a good deal to say in support of the “unconscious memory” of Samuel Butler, the “Mneme” of Semon, although these interesting speculations are little more than a restatement of the inheritance of acquired characters in more metaphysical language, and offer no trace or suggestion as to how the organic memory is transferred from generation to generation.

SHORTER NOTICES.

“Pax Britannica: a Study of the History of British Pacification.” By H. S. Perris. London: Sidgwick and Jackson. 1913. 6s. net.

Mr. H. S. Perris, Secretary of the British Committee of the British-American Peace Centenary, and chief engineer of most of the Peace Congresses, is so solemn a person that he has not seen the point of his own joke. He compiles from Green’s “Short History” and other school-books, with admiring quotations from Macaulay, the familiar story of the Saxon invasions, the Heptarchy, the Norman Conquest, the Hundred Years’ War, the Wars of the Roses, the subjugation of Wales, the wars with Scotland before the Union, and similarly the Conquest of Ireland. An immense admirer of the United States in the cause of Peace, he narrates the Revolution from which the States date their independence, and the four years’ Civil War which prevented their separation. And this he calls the history of British Pacification, offering it as an appropriate present and an acceptable moral lesson on the virtues of Peace principles to the Peace enthusiasts who are to meet to celebrate the centenary of the Treaty of Ghent! When he is not telling of war he relates the centuries-old history of our domestic dissensions between rival parties in Church and State. All this is a mere réchauffé of the most banal Whiggism, Liberalism, Radicalism, and Nonconformity without any discrimination, and the conclusion is that we shall enter on the era of perpetual peace when the Church is disestablished and Home Rule is achieved. Then the Peace Societies and Mr. Perris will disarm, their occupation being gone.

“The Travels of Ellen Cornish.” By Vaughan Cornish. London: Ham-Smith. 1913. 12s. 6d.

“The Travels” include journeys to Japan, Niagara, the Panama Canal, and Jamaica. They were undertaken, we are told by Mr. Cornish, principally for “the study of the

phenomena of surface waves of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere", and their results have been from time to time communicated by Mr. Cornish to the Royal Geographical Society. So far as they are enshrined in this volume they form a collection of not very interesting impressions of countries which the globe-trotter has already made too familiar, and the part Mrs. Cornish plays in them is so slight as to make one wonder at the book's title. Mr. Cornish has considerable faith in his ability to speak about a country on a short acquaintance. He thinks that a passing visit to it does not tend to superficial and one-sided impressions, and that it is an effective substitute for careful book-study. He offers an admirable commentary on this by remarking, after three months in Japan, that he had "realised Buddhism". He was in Jamaica during the earthquake of 1907, but his account of it is extraordinarily devoid of that vividness which one would expect from an eye-witness of the curious and often enthralling scenes which any great cataclysm inevitably produces; and his tameness appears to come not from restraint, but from an inability to see and to present what is happening. How easily he can miss his opportunities is further illustrated by his account of the Panama Canal, to which he was twice a visitor. There, indeed, sheer statistics are eloquent, but he appears unequal to adding to their story any eloquence of his own, though it must be admitted that the Isthmus having proved for so long the happy hunting ground of the picturesque writer, the mere diarist is placed at a disadvantage.

"Things as they are in the Panama." By H. A. Franch. London: Fisher Unwin. 1913. 7s. 6d. net.

Mr. Franch in an interesting account of present-day conditions at Panama aptly calls to mind the amount of labour and ingenuity indispensable for the success of such great undertakings as the Panama Canal, of which no visible trace is left when the work is completed. Travellers in future days, he says, will exclaim, looking on what will seem almost a natural channel, "Is this all we got for nine years' work and half a billion dollars? They will have forgotten the scrubbing of Panama and Colon, forgotten the vast hospitals, the building of hundreds of houses, the scores of little items, like \$43,000 a year merely for oil and negroes to pump it on the pestilent mosquito. The thousand and one little things so essential to the success of the enterprise yet that leave no trace behind".

"California." By Arthur T. Johnson. London: Stanley Paul. 1913. 10s. 6d. net.

Mr. Johnson writes a big and entertaining book on "the Golden State" from the standpoint of one who went there knowing as much and as little of California as the average Englishman. His pages are not so flattering to "the Native Son" who is among the "wonders" that most travellers would wish to avoid, but are unfortunately bound to meet at every turn in California. Mr. Johnson criticises not so much the individual as the atmosphere which breeds him—an atmosphere of self-deception, malfeasance, bluff, and boastfulness. In the Californian area to be found some of the worst of American characteristics. An American fellow-voyageur strongly advised Mr. Johnson not to say "Please", "Thank you", or "I beg your pardon", because it betrayed his nationality, and would encourage the men he met to attempt to fleece him. California provided Mr. Johnson with a most interesting experience, and his book leaves a very striking impression both of the country and the people. The Native Son will not like it, and perhaps Mr. Johnson had better not think of returning to California.

Messrs. A. & C. Black's guide, "The Riviera" (by C. B. Black), appears now in its new and fifteenth edition (2s. 6d. net). It is a compact and useful little guide with capital tips and maps, and it includes the Italian as well as the French Riviera—covering the whole of that grand coast from Marseilles to Leghorn. We quite agree with what the writer says about the Italian State railways. They are badly done. The trains are often dirty, and the luggage arrangements a nuisance. We have seen, by the way, an odd notice posted up either in railways or trams in Italy—"Si prega di non sputare"—and then the same warning goes on to tell you that you are forbidden to smoke.

ERRATUM.—We regret that in a note last week, intending a reference to the broker of Lord Murray, by a slip we wrote instead "solicitor." Sir Frank Crisp, of course, is in town as usual. Lord Murray's broker is absent.

For this Week's Books see pages 818 and 820.

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(Continued on page 820).

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By Order of the Board.

London Office,

A. MOIR, London Secretary.

No. 1 London Wall Buildings, E.C., 26th June, 1913.

LIPTON, LIMITED.

RECORD TURNOVER.

THE Fifteenth Annual General Meeting of Lipton, Limited, was held on Monday, Sir Thomas J. Lipton, Bart. (Chairman of the Company) presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. Walter Weir) having read the notice,

The Chairman said: On the occasion of our last annual meeting I expressed the pleasure it gave me to be able to present to you a report and balance sheet which showed an improvement on the previous year, and I also expressed the opinion that when we met again this year, I should be able to come to you with a still better account of our stewardship. I think you will agree, after having perused the report and balance sheet in your hands, that that opinion has been justified. The volume of business done for the year ending March 15 is, I am glad to say, the largest in the history of the Company, and to give you some idea of the vastness I may say that our turnover is nearly two and a half millions more than it was six years ago. Our trading profits for the year amount to £311,293 17s. 6d., as against £302,901 19s. 8d. for the previous year, an improvement of £8,391 17s. 8d. This is after providing for a much more liberal expenditure on advertising than for the previous year. I would like to point out here that for the past two years we have written off for depreciation nearly £100,000. In addition to these amounts there are other expenses over which we have no control, and which are increasing year by year, as, for instance, outlays under the Workmen's Compensation and Employers' Liability Acts and also the National Insurance Act—the operations of the latter alone increase our expenses something like £5000 a year. Notwithstanding that we have provided for all these charges, we are able to show you a net profit of £165,544, being an improvement on the previous year of £10,600, which, after providing for interest on Debentures, dividend on Preference shares, and paying 6 per cent. on Ordinary shares, enables us to increase our carry-forward by over £17,000, making the total amount carried forward to next year £31,702 8s. 6d. This, had we not adopted the conservative basis I have mentioned, would have permitted us to pay an increased dividend for the year. I have, however, every reason to believe that the trade for the current year will be quite equal to that of the past, and that when we meet again next year you and I, as fellow-shareholders of this Company, will participate to a greater extent in its prosperity. Our estates in Ceylon have been maintained in thorough cultivation and continue to yield satisfactory results. The areas under rubber were affected temporarily by drought in the first half of 1912, with the result that the yield of rubber fell short of the estimate. Our most recent reports, however, state that the trees are showing excellent growth. This year, so far, the weather has been more favourable, and, with a continuance of normal weather, we hope for a yield of dry rubber of 60,000 lb. The area wholly or partly planted with rubber extends to 835 acres, occupying practically all the ground which is not devoted wholly to tea. Our trade in other parts of the East, I am glad to say, is quite satisfactory, and is being well maintained. The extremely high prices that have existed in the bacon market have curtailed the volume of business in that department, but I am hopeful that we shall see improved conditions during the current year. With respect to our cocoa, chocolate, and confectionery departments, it is satisfactory to be able to report that our trade is being fully maintained, and with the constantly increasing consumption of cocoa and chocolate we anticipate increased profits for this branch of our business. Our jam and preserve factory, owing to the high price of sugar, has not done so well as in previous years, but we anticipate a considerably larger profit for the current year, as, owing to the present comparatively low price of sugar, we have been able to make our purchases and contracts on much more advantageous terms. This applies to our other departments in which we use sugar, and, of course, as we are large retailers of this commodity in our shops, we should benefit all round by the improved conditions of the sugar market. To come to the tea department, it is a matter of satisfaction that the demand for Lipton's tea is still on the increase, but we are at some disadvantage through the high prices prevailing in the market, which make it necessary for us to do a greater amount of business in order to maintain our net profit. This, however, we have accomplished, and the condition of affairs, as far as prices are concerned, may be expected to right itself in time. I now beg to move the adoption of the report and balance sheet, and that a further dividend on the Ordinary shares be paid at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum for the last half-year, and that the balance of £31,702 8s. 6d. be carried forward to next account.

Mr. Thomas R. Smith seconded the resolution, which was carried with one dissentient.

A vote of thanks to the chairman and directors concluded the proceedings.

MALACCA RUBBER PLANTATIONS

PRODUCTION AND DIVIDEND.

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Malacca Rubber Plantations, Limited, was held on June 24, Mr. George B. Dodwell (Chairman of the Company) presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. A. W. Copeland) read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditor.

The Chairman said: Ladies and gentlemen,—As the report and accounts for 1912 have been in your hands for the usual period, I propose, with your permission, to take them as read. There are, however, one or two points upon which I should like to remark. You will see that we spent upon the estates on capital account during the year under review the sum of £124,972 5s. 1d. If you turn up the balance-sheet for 1911 you will see that the amount expended in that year was £208,286 11s. 7d., and a comparison of the figures, of course, shows a very heavy reduction. This year will, we think, show a further large reduction, and next year we expect that the sum charged to development will be quite a small one. It must always be remembered that we still have large areas which, although under rubber, are not yet in tapping, and are therefore at present a charge upon your Company's resources, and we believe that the amount shown by the present balance-sheet under this heading may be described as moderate. You will have observed that our output for the year under review considerably exceeded our forecast, and that it totalled the somewhat imposing amount of 2,219,990 lb., as against an output of 1,086,000 lb. for 1911. We obtained for it a sum of £504,357 17s., which works out at 4s. 6½d. per lb. The labour position continues to receive the close attention of the local management, and on this vital question I am glad to be able to repeat what I said to you on the last occasion upon which it was my privilege to address you and to inform you that we have no cause for anxiety on this score. The constant training of fresh tappers to deal with new areas as they come into bearing is an arduous task, and it is one of the importance of which is fully realised by your planting staff in Malacca, and your general manager, who has just returned to the East after nearly a year's absence in England, writes us that "there is no doubt that our system of tapping has proved a huge success." In this connection I may state that since we last met we have had to record with regret the death of Mr. Chan Koon Cheng, our former planting adviser in Malacca, to whom we were indebted for some very valuable advice upon this extremely important detail of management. Speaking generally, the health conditions on your plantations were during the year 1912, and remain, excellent, both as regards Europeans and Asiatics. Of the many properties which the Company owns, only one, and that one of the smaller ones, is causing us anxiety, as we are told that there has been a good deal of fever there. The General Manager informs us that he is at present, in concert with our medical staff, making every effort to bring this particular property into a healthy condition. The question of hospital accommodation has been receiving the attention of the whole of the planting community in Malacca, and a system has been devised whereby the Government there is to provide hospital accommodation for coolies, the estates contributing according to a fixed rate. This arrangement is common to the whole of the settlement of Malacca, and it is expected that it will prove a success. I really do not know that anything more remains to be said upon the year with which the report and accounts deal. It has been marked by orderly progress and development, and is one, I think, upon which we may unreservedly congratulate ourselves. I think I should also say that it is a year upon which the seventy Europeans who are now on the Company's staff in the East may congratulate themselves, and I am sure that I carry you all with me when I say that we appreciate both the zeal and the interest of which the excellent results for the year 1912 are the evidence. The year under review completes a period of seven years' service by your board, and before I turn to the future I should like to say a word as to the progress which your undertaking has made during that time. I wish, at this period of baffling uncertainty, as to not only the immediate, but also the more remote, prospects of our industry, that every one of our shareholders might have the opportunity of studying the original prospectus of your company, a copy of which our Secretary will be pleased to send to any shareholder making application. That prospectus consisted very largely of an exceedingly unfavourable and adverse report by an expert of that time, who predicted that we could never expect to get from our laterite hills good outputs or anything like the results obtained from trees growing upon rich flat country. Well, ladies and gentlemen, after it had become clear to us that the opinion of the expert in question was erroneous, we had only one anxiety left, and that was the price of rubber, and for the last five years we have continuously laboured to protect your interests against a gradual fall. Our achievement in this respect, so far as it relates to the finances of the Company, is unquestionably without parallel. Your original capital was £300,000, which up to to-day has been increased by £53,964 only, and your debenture liability is £310,360, and, as against such debenture liability and such relatively small increase of capital, a sum of no less than £875,000 has gone or is going into your undertaking, with the result that your present output of rubber is approximately double that of the second largest producing company in the world. It is only necessary to glance through the original prospectus for one to realise the nature of the work that has been accomplished, and it is evident that if the present price of rubber were 4s., instead of 3s., we should receive at your hands to-day a hearty recognition of a veritable triumph of administration and management. Turning now to the present and the future, I think that the only thing which need cause us either perplexity or misgiving is something which is not personal, if I may so phrase it, to the Company, in that it has nothing to do with the Company's organisation or estates, and that is the price of our commodity. You will remember that after we declared an interim dividend last March there occurred a sudden, an unforeseen, and an almost dramatic drop in the price of the raw material of about 1s. per lb. in the short space of two months, and it will, I imagine, be apparent to everyone that such a collapse must affect the dividend position. We obtained, as you have been advised, an output of no less than 255,700 lb. from the estates for the month of May, this being the highest to date, and we think we may safely assume that we shall harvest in the neighbourhood of 1,400,000 lb. for the first six months of the year. But, with the prices now ruling, the board consider that they must postpone until later in the year the consideration of the declaration of a further interim dividend on account of the current year. By the autumn our output should have largely increased, and we shall then reconsider the

matter in the light of the then state of the market for the raw material. It is, of course, one of our very strong points that we offset any reasonable fall in price by an increase in production, but a drop of 1s. per lb. in so short a space of time is one of those things which even our producing strength refuses automatically to adjust, and which must, therefore, with a view to the future, be met by a conservative policy for the time being in the matter of dividends. As I have already remarked, for the first six months of the present year we harvest approximately 1,400,000 lb., or nearly half our estimate for the whole year, and it therefore becomes apparent that our forecast is likely to be materially exceeded, because it was made upon the assumption that the first half of the year would show a considerably smaller total than the latter half. I think therefore, that although we elect to adopt a policy of caution for the present, we are entitled to look very hopefully to the future, both immediate and remote. As to the latter, I may perhaps say that for the year 1914 we think we may reasonably expect to increase our output by 1,000,000 lb.

Now, gentlemen, I have a word to say as to finance. We require a comparatively small further amount of capital to enable us to bring the whole of our planted areas into bearing, and we have also to undertake a certain amount of planting. We are not eager to plant up further areas on any large scale yet, and we think that the present position of the rubber industry suggests a large amount of circumspection in this respect; but, as you are aware, the terms of a good many of the Malacca land grants are that land shall be planted up within a certain time. We are approaching the Local Government with a view to making the planting of fresh areas as gradual as possible, and we are hopeful that your general manager will be able to effect some reasonable arrangement. But extensions must be made, and we have recently instructed your general manager to commence planting on certain areas at present uncultivated, which he reports as very suitable for that purpose. Now, both development of planted areas and planting up of uncultivated areas require capital, and we have issued 25,000 of our unissued Ordinary shares of £9. This was, at the time we issued them, considerably above the market price, and as a consideration we have granted an option over a similar number of shares for one year at £10. This is obviously very much better business for the company than inviting public subscription at a price less than the ruling market price for the time being, and we were very glad to be able to deal with the question in this manner. We think that the amount, £225,000, which we have thus secured, and which involves only a comparatively small increase of issued capital, should just about serve to bring the whole of your planted areas into bearing, and give us a start with our fresh planting. My attention has been called to some criticism of this new issue, in which it has been suggested that instead of raising fresh capital we should finance non-productive areas entirely out of revenue. Well, gentlemen, that is a very unusual policy; but, of course, if we thought that the general body of shareholders desired its adoption we should adopt it; but I think there are factors apart from general principles which suggest that there is no necessity for us to starve our present shareholders for the benefit of their successors. You have a very largely increased output assured, as certainly as anything in this world can be, and you are putting for the year under review £30,431 4s. 2d. to reserve, in the shape of the debenture sinking fund, and we shall place a similar proportion of our profits to reserve this year. It is impossible to say exactly what that amount will be, but if it equals the amount we are dealing with for 1912, we shall have a reserve of over £60,000 by the end of the present year. On a review, therefore, of the situation as a whole, I cannot see that Spartan methods are either necessary or desirable. There is only one other point upon which I have to crave your indulgence for a few moments, but its importance is to my mind so great that you will, I believe, forgive me for further shortly trespassing on your time. When I last addressed you I inadvertently at some length on what appeared to me and to my co-directors the extremely unsatisfactory nature of our present method of disposing of our produce. Ladies and gentlemen, nothing has occurred which would make me wish to take back anything I then said to you. Weight for weight, the premium on hard fine Para was then 25 per cent.; it has since increased to something like 35 per cent., and we say to-day, just as emphatically as we said then, that the machinery of periodical auctions without reserve, where you have a limited number of buyers, is all in favour of the buyer, as against the seller. This question is one which is receiving the most anxious and constant attention of your board, who would be prepared to co-operate with any other producing companies in giving a fair trial to any scheme which offers a reasonable prospect of providing methods of sale more suitable to the present state of the industry. We have no desire whatever to make any attempt artificially to inflate prices; what we want is some system which shall give free play to the law of supply and demand, and we submit with some confidence that a system of periodical auctions held without reserve does not, where you have a limited number of buyers, afford much free play. I believe that your company was never in so sound a condition internally as to-day. The only fly in the amber is, of course, the price of rubber. If the fall had been gradual, as everyone anticipated, we should have been able to deal with it, but coming so suddenly as it did, it has disturbed us for the moment. But if the raw material remains around about its present level for the rest of the year, our great producing capacity should show you good results, while if the collapse of the spring should be adjusted by some recovery in the autumn—and who can predicate with any confidence that it will not be?—the year 1913 will prove, I believe, taken all round, the most satisfactory year we have yet had to chronicle in the history of your undertaking. I formally move that the report and accounts be adopted.

Mr. J. A. H. Jackson seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Other formal business having been done, the Chairman thanked the shareholders for attending the meeting, and expressed the hope that at their next gathering the directors would have something better to present.

Mr. Beeston moved a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Abbott and carried, and, the Chairman having briefly acknowledged the compliment, the meeting terminated.

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